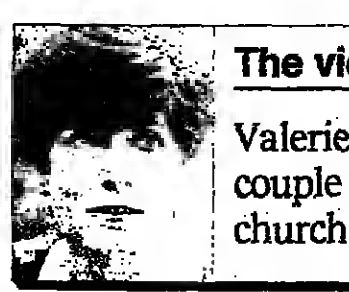


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THE TIMES

No. 65,121

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 25 1994

Mood of crisis among Tory MPs as Euro-rebels refuse to yield

'Suicide pact' supported by the Right

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

JOHN Major's authority looked increasingly damaged last night as right-wing Cabinet ministers were asked for loyalty pledges and a Tory backbencher said in the Commons that he would rather lose the Conservative whip than support the European finance bill.

As a mood of crisis gripped the Conservative parliamentary party, the Prime Minister signed up the full Cabinet to the so-called "suicide pact" to go down together if they lost the vote on Monday.

It is understood that the Cabinet's four leading right-wingers — Peter Lilley, Michael Portillo, John Redwood and Jonathan Aitken — were spoken to individually by Mr Major, Kenneth Clarke or Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, the day after the seven most senior ministers in the Cabinet had agreed on the confidence tactic. It is also believed that some of them initially expressed strong doubts about the strategy but went along with it after it was clear that they could not alter the decision.

Mr Portillo said yesterday: "The Cabinet's position that Monday's vote must be regarded as a vote of confidence is one that I agree with and agreed with when it was first put to me."

Last night Tory Euro-rebels were refusing to back down in the face of what some of them saw as a spurious Cabinet unity and hardliners spoke publicly about the possibility of a leadership challenge to the Prime Minister next week. The re-election of Sir Marcus Fox as chairman of the 1992 Committee was the only relief for Mr Major.

The strength of initial rightwing Cabinet reluctance to the plan to turn the Euro-debate into a confidence matter also became apparent, as did the Right's anger at the role of Mr Clarke, whom it believes to be the driving force behind both the decision on the confidence option and the raising of the stakes since then.

Mr Major told a private



Portillo yesterday: "matter of confidence"

meeting of Conservative peers last night that he was not "holding a pistol to anybody's head" but repeated that the Government would have no choice but to resign as a whole if it was defeated. This came after the Cabinet took the unusual step after its weekly meeting of issuing a statement saying that it unanimously backed the decision to make the vote an issue of confidence. It issued the declaration after rumours swept Westminster that the rightwingers were angry at being told to "fall on their swords" if he asked the Queen for a general election.

The Government's disarray was exploited mercilessly in the Commons by Tony Blair. The Labour leader accused Mr Major of leading an "ill-disciplined rabble incapable of governing this country". Listing recent embarrassments for the Government, including the resignation of Patrick Nicholas as a vice-chairman of the Conservative party and the Cabinet resignation threat, Mr Blair said Tory backbenchers were "in a state of anarchy".

The attack was joined by Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrats leader, who said that most people believed the Government and its "kamikaze Cabinet" had descended into "farce and civil war". But the most significant intervention in Commons Question Time came from the Euro-sceptic MP Christopher Gill, who raised gasps across the House when he told Mr

Major that he would rather resign the party whip than vote for a Bill which dozens of his colleagues disagreed and for which there was no popular support. It would be "absolute folly" to press on with a measure which effectively imposed a highly unpopular tax on the British people for membership of a highly unpopular club.

Mr Gill will therefore be among the Conservative MPs who will lose the party whip if they rebel on Monday. The threat of that punishment may even yet prevent a substantial revolt and it looks certain that the Government, with Ulster Unionist support, will win the day.

In a bizarre twist it was confirmed that MPs who rebel on Monday and lose the Tory whip as a result, will not be eligible to sign a round-robin letter calling for a leadership election. That appeared last night to make it even more unlikely that Mr Major's critics would be able to muster the 34 votes needed to trigger a contest.

Labour tried to catch wavering Tory support with its amendment to the Bill. Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor, will speak to a motion that the Bill "is not an acceptable measure as it increases UK contributions to the EU without action by the Government to cut fraud and waste in Europe or to reduce expenditure on the Common Agricultural Policy".

But at a meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party last night there was widespread opposition, some of it from frontbenchers, to the leadership's decision to abstain on the main second reading motion. Mr Blair promised to consider the representations that he should also lead his MPs into the lobbies against the main

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Sir Marcus yesterday: rival nomination "was not a shot across my bows"

Fox sees off challenge

By Nicholas Wood, Chief Political Correspondent

SIR Marcus Fox last night beat off a challenge by Sir Nicholas Bonsor for the chairmanship of the 1992 Committee, giving the Prime Minister a breathing space in his tussle with the alliance of mutinous Tory Euro-sceptics and backbench critics plotting his downfall.

Sir Marcus had been attacked as John Major's "messenger boy" and last night Tory MPs judged that his victory had helped to shore up the Prime Minister's position in advance of Monday's confidence vote over Europe and

Wednesday's deadline for a "stalking horse" to mount a leadership challenge.

Voting figures from the ballot are never officially disclosed but Sir Marcus indicated last night that he had won comfortably. He was not apologising for speaking up for Mr Major or for his up-front style of leadership. "It is not a shot across my bows. The confidence that my colleagues have shown in me shows that they believe I do listen and they get the man they see."

Sir Marcus, 67, who has led

Tory backbenchers through the past two turbulent years at Westminster, held off Sir Nicholas's challenge with the help of the mainstream Tory Right and government loyalists.

Sir Nicholas, 51, although a Maastricht rebel, was nominally from the left-wing, pro-European Lollard stable, the traditional rivals of the right-wing 92 Group led by Sir George Gardiner. Although the right-wing vote was split, enough of its members stayed loyal to Sir Marcus to keep him in his post.

Inquiry starts on disclosure of BT files on MI5 and royalty

By Nick Nuttall and Michael Evans

BRITAIN'S intelligence services were reeling yesterday from the disclosure that their computerised systems containing sensitive telephone numbers and addresses have been breached.

An inquiry into how a British Telecom temporary employee gained access to secret files on the royal family, the intelligence services and the Prime Minister is to be launched by the government's data protection watchdog. Last night Steve Fleming, the journalist at the heart of the controversy, was being interviewed by police.

The scale of the information obtained, it is believed, by the theft of computer files, is so great that the Cabinet Office took charge of the investigation yesterday. The inquiry will focus on allegations that a temporary employee copied information held on BT's customer service system after seeing the database password pinned on an office wall.

The system contains addresses and telephone numbers of high ranking public figures, military installations and offices of MI5 and MI6.

Many of the numbers are so secret that they are not even classified as ex-directory; addresses of intelligence offices are listed as those of "front" companies. One MI5 office is listed as a shoe shop and a training centre in Balham, south London. The employee sent the information to Mr Fleming, a freelance journalist from Scotland, who then joined BT on a temporary contract to verify the claims.

MI5 has carried out an initial investigation and has concluded, after talks with BT officials, that none of its most sensitive telephone numbers have been compromised. "There is deep concern. We do not believe there has been great damage, but until the

problem has been resolved we will not know for sure," one security source said.

Both MI5 and the Cabinet Office will study whether BT's huge redundancy programme has damaged security by putting contract staff at the heart of the secret database which holds the confidential information. If the intelligence services are not satisfied with BT's security, the numbers and addresses of member of the royal family, intelligence centres and military bases might be transferred to a separate database with tougher security.

Computer crime lawyers



Fleming: journalist being interviewed by police

said yesterday that by failing to "take reasonable care" to protect personal, electronically held, information the telephone company had broken the data protection laws. BT has denied that an outsider had hacked in to the computer and said it was seeking legal advice on Mr Fleming's actions while employed by the company.

Under the 1990 computer misuse laws, hackers can face a £2,000 fine and up to five years in prison. However, the

Continued on page 2, col 6

Nurse suspended in new inquiry

By Paul Wilkinson and Stewart Tandler

A SECOND nurse has been suspended over irregularities in the treatment of intensive care patients. The "errors" were discovered at the cardiac unit of the Northern General Hospital, Sheffield, which is

already linked to another investigation. The nurse was sent home by the hospital in September. The unit is one of the country's leading centres for heart surgery. It has been visited by Nottinghamshire police investigating the suspicious deaths of two patients at Bassetlaw District Hospital in Worksop.

South Yorkshire police have been consulted by the Sheffield hospital authorities, but no criminal inquiry has yet been launched. Last night the Northern General confirmed the suspension as a result of three "reported errors".

A spokesman said: "None of the errors caused any harm to patients. Patients and relatives were informed at the time." He said that the suspension did not imply blame or wrongdoing at this stage.

The hospital would not elaborate on what was meant by "errors", but it tends to suggest lapses in judgment or procedure rather than a deliberate or criminal intent.

The hospital is only 15 miles from Bassetlaw hospital where police are investigating possible tampering with oxygen and drug supplies.

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Nato blocks US plan over Bihac

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

NATO last night blocked an American plan to save the Muslim Bosnian town of Bihac from falling into Serb hands, instead sending the plan to the United Nations.

Deepening transatlantic tensions over the Balkans were reflected when Washington presented its plan to stop the northwestern Bosnian enclave being overrun by Serb forces which are reported to be within sight of the town centre. The scheme amounted to Nato taking over control from the UN in Bosnia.

A statement issued after a Nato Ambassadors' meeting in Brussels made barely any mention of the American plan, launched in Brussels and New York on Wednesday night, for a "stabilisation plan" backed by Nato air power. Instead, the statement repeated the alliance's policy of using airstrikes to protect UN troops but for no wider purpose.

Robert Hunter, the American Ambassador to Nato, presented the three-point plan which suggested that the UN "safe area" around Bihac be clearly defined and extended, that all Serb forces and weapons withdraw or face unlimited

airstrikes and that the area remain "demilitarised" and supervised by a lightly-armed international police force.

Opposition to the proposal was led by Britain, France and Germany which insisted that final authority over military operations in Bosnia should remain with the UN and that any decisive intervention against Serb ground forces would require a massively enlarged UN force.

A Nato official said that governments opposed to the American proposals insisted that the Bihac issue should be sent back to the UN if Nato could not agree a practical plan to halt the Serb advance on the enclave. Another official said: "Nato is not in Bosnia to fight a war. We are there to support the UN in a peacekeeping operation."

The setback to the plans will have sharp repercussions for President Clinton who is under pressure from Republicans to take a tougher line against the Serbs but without committing American ground troops to the Balkans.

Serb attack, page 13



Poitier: broke cinema racial stereotypes

Poitier gets Disney job

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

SIDNEY Poitier, the Oscar-winning actor and director who started work as a theatre caretaker, has been appointed company president of Walt Disney.

Poitier, 67, who was raised on his parents' tomato farm in the Bahamas, will fill the post left vacant since the death of Frank Wells in a helicopter accident in April.

Poitier broke racial stereotypes by showing blacks as intelligent leading men and has starred in 40 films. To Sir With Love and In the Heat Of The Night are among his best known.



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Constituency workers dread prospect of general election

Vote mavericks face threat of deselection by angry parties

By ANDREW PIERCE

REBEL Tory MPs face deselection by their local parties if they defy the election threat and vote against the Government.

Most of the 15 mavericks who have tabled an amendment to Monday's crucial debate on the European Finance Bill, which could bring about John Major's downfall, will go before their association officers this weekend to defend their role in the ultimate rebellion.

Some of the hardcore opponents have already been told by their association officers to back John Major or else. Bill Cash and Teresa Gorman, two of the most high profile dissenters, are under pressure to toe the government line. Sir Richard Body, who has hinted he might resign and force a by-election in his Holland with Boston constituency, will go before his association tonight.

But there was widespread sympathy for the MPs and barely concealed anger in many Conservative associations at the tactics of the Prime Minister. "How many more times is he going to try wolf?" said one despairing constituency chairman. Bill Cash, Teresa Gorman, John Wilkinson, Sir Richard Body and Christopher Gill will be fighting for their future if they don't pull back from the brink.

John Wilkinson, Tory MP for Ruislip and Northwood

since 1979, has been left in no doubt his future is at stake. Rachel Windsor, chairman of the association, said: "He knows the consequences if he votes against the Government on a confidence issue. Party workers are angry at the prospect of an election."

"The executive has decided that he should support the Government. That view has been made clear to Mr Wilkinson. He is entitled to vote which ever way he wants. But he knows the options open to us if he ignores our wishes. We cannot afford an election. There is no such thing anymore as a safe Tory seat."

Bill Cash was also given uncompromising advice by Desmond Trigg, the chairman of Stafford Conservatives. Mr Trigg said: "An election would be suicide for the Tory govern-

ment and suicide for us. It might also be suicide for Bill Cash even though he is a fine constituency MP."

Feeling was also running high in Billerica. One senior Tory said: "Teresa Gorman is in trouble. She is always on television attacking the Prime Minister and the Government. We might not like Europe. John Major isn't Mrs Thatcher. But we would like a Labour government even less. If an election is brought about, Teresa Gorman will pay the price."

At least one maverick, Tony Marlow, the MP for Northampton North, was given unwavering support by his rank-and-file. Barry Massey, the association chairman, said: "We are solidly behind him. He is consistent and he has huge support for his views."

Those prepared either to vote against the Government or abstain include John Carlisle (Luton North), Sir Teddy Taylor (Southend East), and Bill Walker (Tayside North). At least ten more MPs believed to be giving serious thought to joining the rebellion include Sir Trevor Skeet, Nicholas Winterton, Ann Winterton, Nicholas Budge, Edward Leigh, Richard Shepherd, Sir George Gardiner, Toby Jessel and Roger Knapman.



Gorman: pressure to toe the line

Right supports pact, page 1

Right supports Cabinet pact

Continued from page 1
motion. The Cabinet statement confirmed its determination to treat the vote as a matter of confidence because it implemented an international agreement.

It followed a debate in which Mr Major again asked all ministers whether they were behind the tactic. "If the Government were defeated the Government would resign and the Prime Minister would ask the Queen to dissolve Parliament," the state-

ment said. Downing Street added pointedly: "There is no question of the Prime Minister resigning and an alternative Conservative Prime Minister being found."

The loyalty pledges came not only from Mr Portillo. Mr Redwood also let it be known that he was standing behind the Prime Minister and Mr Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, issued a similar statement, declaring: "I hope that no Conservative MPs will join with the Opposition parties to

defeat the Government over the European finance bill on Monday night, since they must realise that to defeat the Government on an issue which the Cabinet has unanimously agreed is one of confidence would lead to the resignation of the Government." Sources close to Mr Redwood linked his name to the words of his two colleagues.

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Letters, page 21



Gill: thought least likely to provoke clash

Champion from the heartland of spotted dick

By NICHOLAS WOOD AND ALICE THOMSON

CHRISTOPHER Gill, the Ludlow MP who told the Prime Minister that he would rather "resign the party whip" than vote for the EU budget Bill, was among 25 Tory MPs who attended a rebel meeting on Tuesday night.

Mr Gill is one of the more reticent of the Euro-sceptics and among the least likely to provoke a public clash in the House. He had been thought to be wavering in the face of the threat of losing the Tory whip and, possibly, being deselected by his local party.

His local constituency party will have to decide whether to stand by him if he is refused the Tory whip. He has a 14,152 majority in the Welsh Marches of Southern Shropshire and is known as a conscientious MP.

But few MPs could have been surprised at his views. Mr Gill, 57, was one of the behind-the-scenes whips for the rebels during the Maastricht debate. Although he avoids the limelight, he has proved a bulldog in getting his own colleagues to demonstrate the strength of their

convictions. The son of a meat manufacturer and sausage-maker, he left school at 17 to join the family firm. He believes he speaks for the traditional England of black pudding and spotted dick. Since becoming an MP in 1987, he has quietly stood against "all red tape Euro-folly".

The rightwing libertarian also believes there is far too much meddling in British legislation. He has repeatedly called for lower taxes and believes in the reintroduction



of corporal punishment. He has spoken out against a Bill to safeguard British bedgowns.

Nicknamed "The Butcher of Ludlow" because of his family's sausage-making business, Mr Gill has also been vociferous on the issue of unsafe meat. In 1990 he was strongly critical of a leading microbiologist's fears over "mad cow" disease, accusing him of peddling "conjecture and speculation". In his opinion, the medical profession was "barmy".

MI5 and MI6 fury at security breach

Continued from page 1
intelligence services emphasised yesterday that the security breach was not the case of a hacker getting into the British Telecom computer system but rather of unauthorised disclosure by a former BT employee. "This is a personnel security problem, not a hacking problem," one security source said.

Alastair Kelman, a lawyer specialising in computer law and an adviser on security, agreed. "This case illustrates what computer people have been saying for some time. The real hackers are inside companies."

The role of British Telecom is crucial in the intelligence world because security-cleared engineers are called on to provide a telephone tapping service for all the different agencies as well as for government departments.

A team of BT engineers works closely with MI5 from a large office building in West London. MI6 requirements, including the tapping of embassy telephones in London, are met by a unit of BT engineers in south London, and government departments that require phone taps have the services of a large BT organisation housed in a prominent office block in Chelsea.

The first hint of a leak of sensitive telephone numbers came this month when a newspaper in Scotland published an article claiming that secret Downing Street numbers were about to be disclosed.

The breach of secret material is particularly embarrassing for MI5 and MI6 because each service has only this year moved into new premises where top priority has been given to providing the highest security.

Rupert Allason, Tory MP for Torbay, who writes spy books under the pseudonym Nigel West, said: "I do not think this is too alarming, although it is obviously irritating that the location of certain operational buildings has been compromised. What is of concern is that BT's database has been breached. There is no point in having secret passwords if they are circulated around the office."

High-tech crime, page 7



Knight in shining armour saves PM from drubbing

Phe! Difficult as it may seem to imagine circumstances to which an earnest question about world population growth from Mr Richard Ottaway (C, Croydon S) could rank alongside the parting of the Red Sea in the "Thank Heavens For That" stakes of history, such circumstances arose at PM's Questions yesterday. Ottaway rode in from Croydon on his white charger to rescue Mr Major from a serious mugging by Tony Blair, Paddy Ashdown and Christopher Gill.

Christopher who? Mr Gill's is not a household name, even at Westminster. The thin, grave, greying Conservative MP for Ludlow is seen but less often heard in the Chamber. Gill is not a voluble fellow. Once, years ago, he all but dived up in a Question to the Prime Minister and your sketchwriter remembers deciding not to draw attention to this as it seemed unkind to a newish Member.

Gill showed no such mercy yesterday. He leapt out of the backbench shadows from a position some ten yards behind the PM's right shoulder and clubbed him to the ground. He wanted to ask, he said, about something "I would be prepared to resign the Party whip over". Would the Prime Minister "recognise the absolute folly of imposing a highly unpopular tax for the purpose of paying the subscription to an unpopular and increasingly expensive club?"

During its first half, Mr Gill's question seemed to be heading for a rant about VAT on gas, then, in mid-sentence, it appeared to transform itself into a complaint about Europe. Was this an ingenious attempt by Gill to link the cost of gas to the Germans? Was he signalling that he would rebel on both issues?

Or was he so angry that all his gripes had come tumbling out at once?

Whichever it was it effectively baffled Mr Major, who struggled to his feet and came back fighting with a counterblast about Britain sticking to its obligations.

Then, just when the PM seemed to be recovering his balance, a second assailant leapt at him: not, this time, from the shadows behind, but from the limelight opposite. Tony Blair saw an unprotected jaw before him, took a swing and, unusually for a Labour leader, landed the punch square-on.

It was Blair's best performance so far. Piling on the agony he listed the Tories' recent embarrassments over a deputy chairman, a vice-chairman, and a chairman of the 1922 Committee. It was anarchy, he said. The governing party were "an ill-disciplined rabble". Resisting from these blows, Mr Major retreated into pedantry and accused Blair of muddling the positions of the office-holders he had cited. This was rather like King John quibbling with the barons over the grammar in their Magna Carta. Wisely, Blair quit while he was winning.

A third mugger lurched at Mr Major, cradling a sharpened and lovingly polished sound-bite about the "kamikaze Cabinet", stabbed at the Prime Minister, inflicting nasty if superficial wounds.

Still conscious, Mr Major looked desperately around in mute appeal for help. Happily in these public assaults there is sometimes a member of the public ready to rush in and protect the victim.

You might not have thought that world population growth and the Cairo summit was a big concern in Croydon just now, but kindly, chubby-cheeked Mr Ottaway decided otherwise. He asked Mr Major's views.

The Prime Minister was pleased, not to say overjoyed, to give them.

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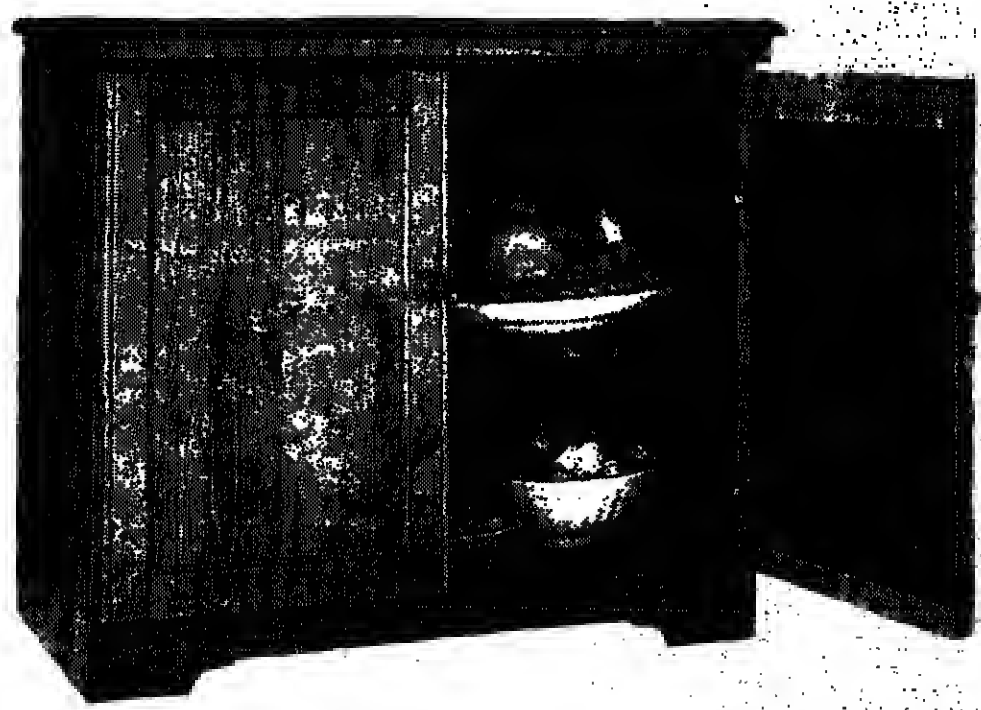


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PHILIPS

'We are walking a fine line between getting away with it and having a serious incident'

Instructors warned canoe centre head of safety fears

By A Staff Reporter

AN INSTRUCTOR wept in court yesterday as she described to a jury how she wrote to the head of the activity centre involved in the Lynne Bay canoe tragedy, warning him that a disaster was waiting to happen.

Joy Cawthorne said safety standards at the St Albans Challenge Centre were "virtually non-existent" and described the centre's manager, Joseph Stoddart, 53, as "a headless chicken who was unable to cope".

She added: "The centre broke guidelines that governing sports bodies set down every day, every single day."

Miss Cawthorne wrote to Mr Stoddart's employer, Peter Kite, 44, nine months before the tragedy last year in which four schoolchildren drowned.

She told Winchester Crown Court that she said in her letter: "We think you should take a careful look at your standards of safety otherwise you might find yourselves trying to explain why someone's son or daughter is not coming home."

She finished the letter with: "Nobody wishes or wants that to happen, but it will sooner or later."

Miss Cawthorne said she and her boyfriend, Richard Retallick, a fellow instructor, left the centre after just five weeks in June 1992. She said: "We left because our ethics got

the better of us. We are both professionals and felt we could not make it any better so we left. We had both worked at a local education authority centre which was highly professional."

The court heard that she also warned Mr Kite in the letter: "At present we are walking a very fine line between getting away with it and



Stoddart: "a headless chicken unable to cope"

having a very serious incident. The Sports Council has stated that court cases dealing with negligence in sports coaching are on the increase in this country. We feel sure that your insurance company must have stated some numbers and rules for your company to follow."

The letter went on to detail another case. "There were 20

children, two schoolteachers and two instructors. One of these instructors had never sat in a canoe himself. So that makes one instructor and 23 beginners for a two-hour session."

To our reckoning that is three times the specified ratio of one to eight as stated by the British Canoe Union. Each session is over this ratio at the centre."

But after sending the letter Miss Cawthorne and Mr Retallick received no reply and wrote to Mr Kite again after they had left the centre. Mr Kite then replied that he had spent "a considerable amount of time" discussing the matters with Mr Stoddart and that most of their points were being sorted out.

In court Miss Cawthorne said of Mr Stoddart: "He was disorganised and tried all the time to keep up but it was too far ahead. Things were happening and he never seemed to be able to catch up."

Asked by Neil Butterfield, QC, for the prosecution, if he appeared to be a man on top of his job, Miss Cawthorne replied: "No." She said safety standards at the centre were "virtually non-existent".

Of Tony Mann, the senior instructor on the ill-fated trip, she said: "His ability was very limited. His standards of safety and his knowledge of safety was minimal. I have been

around professionally qualified instructors and he did not come up to any kind of standard in his safety or ability."

She said that other instructors at the centre were not properly qualified and that there was no one there who was qualified to teach other instructors to British Canoe Union instructor level.

She claimed that proper safety equipment was not provided. Instructors were not given first aid kits, flares or tow-lines.

Miss Cawthorne, who was paid £30 a week, held qualifications in swimming, gymnastics, powerboating and windsurfing.

Mr Retallick told the court that he had the highest canoe instructing qualification at the centre. He said: "There were between 10 and 12 pupils per instructor which was nowhere close to the accepted ratio. I mentioned that I was unhappy with this, but the centre did not have any set safety standards. There were no guidelines."

Mr Stoddart, 53, of West Lulworth, Dorset, denies manslaughter through gross negligence in March last year. Mr Kite, 44, from London, and Active Learning and Leisure Ltd, now OLL Ltd, of Aldwych, central London, also deny the same charge. The trial continues.



Joy Cawthorne left the centre after just five weeks because of lax safety rules

Three killed Muslim woman in exorcism

By A Staff Reporter

AN OLD Bailey jury yesterday convicted two people of manslaughter after a Muslim woman was beaten to death during an exorcism.

The jury had deliberated for more than 16 hours before convicting Siraj Tulla, 37, and Hafiz Patel, 19, the dead woman's brother, of the manslaughter of Farida Patel, 22, at her family's home in Ilford, east London, last December.

Julian Bevan, QC, for the prosecution, had alleged that Tulla and Hafiz Patel, with Ms Patel's sister Rabiya, who admitted manslaughter, and Mona Rai, described as a Muslim holy woman or high priestess, beat Ms Patel to drive evil spirits from her body. Ms Rai denies manslaughter. The beatings, using a walking stick and a vacuum-cleaner tube, lasted two days. Ms Patel's stomach was jumped on and nine ribs were broken.

Mr Bevan said the Crown accepted they had intended to beat Ms Patel, which was why the charge was manslaughter, not murder. But they must have realised that they were causing serious harm.

The jury has still to reach a verdict on Ms Rai, 47, of Stratford, east London, who claims not to have seen or taken part in any beatings but only to have prayed and recited the Koran. The jurors were sent to a hotel for a third night. Rabiya and Hafiz Patel, and Tulla, of Barkingside, were remanded for sentence.

Boy, 16, guilty of killing bystander with 2ft bayonet

By Paul Wilkinson

A SCHOOLBOY was yesterday convicted of the brutal bayonet murder of a teenager innocently caught up in a pitched battle between two school gangs.

Errol Donaldson, who was 14 at the time of the killing, was ordered to be detained at Her Majesty's pleasure. After the hearing the victim's father told how the killing had destroyed his life, driving him to drink and to throw away a successful business.

Donaldson, 16, was found guilty by a 10-2 verdict of the murder of Grant Jackson in April last year. He stabbed

Peter, 50, told how the murder had changed his life. "I haven't worked since the day my son died. I retired the day after. I went on a bender for a month and I have been heavily under the influence of drink since then."

Mr Jackson, a design engineer, had been about to start production of his own design for a £2,500 mountain bike, for which he had hundreds of orders.

"I would have made a lot of money from the bike but I just could not face work and I have felt like that every day since. I just potter about in the garden and then go to the pub later in the day."

"I am living off my savings but I am not bothered if they run out. The summer is not too bad because I can lie on the lawn but the winter is depressing. I have not had counselling, there doesn't seem any point, but I have seen psychiatrists and they say I might come out of it or I might not."

Mr Jackson and his wife, Christine, 48, who have a daughter, live in Nether Edge, Sheffield.

"I didn't realise until Grant was killed how happy the whole family was," he said. "I didn't realise what happiness I had until it was taken away."

The jury was told that when Donaldson, of Shirecliffe, Sheffield, was he had watched his mother stab his father to death. She served a sentence for manslaughter. In court yesterday she cried out when her son was convicted and wept with relatives.

Dr Peter Wood, a psychiatrist for the defence, said that when he carried out the murder Donaldson had been extremely excited and hyped up. "He was not normal in the sense of having the usual checks and balances within his make-up that helps others back off."

Before the killing he had been excluded from Notre Dame School, Sheffield, on three occasions for violence.

£800 fine for bogus rape claim

A teenager who falsely accused a man of rape was fined £800 yesterday. Lynn McArthur, 19, was told she was lucky not to get a custodial sentence.

Dumbarton Sheriff Court heard that McArthur, of Alexandria, Strathclyde, had consented to sex in the back of a car with Robert Miller, 23. She had been told to be home by 3am but did not return until 9am, and when challenged made up a story that Mr Miller had forced her to stay in his car for five hours and had raped her twice.

Mr Miller was questioned by police for five hours and subjected to medical tests. Yesterday McArthur admitted wasting police time.

Addict patient attacks GP

A family doctor was attacked by a patient wielding a knife after being forced to treat him by the family health services authority.

Dr John Ainley, a GP in Bournemouth, had rejected the patient, a drug addict, because he feared he might be violent. Last week the patient pulled a knife on another doctor at the practice.

Patients who cannot find a practice to take them are allocated on a strict rota to GPs who must accept them for at least three months.

Mistake may free soldiers

An error by Cypriot prison guards who confiscated case notes belonging to three British soldiers charged with kidnapping and murdering a Danish woman may lead to the men being set free.

Antonios Andreou, the lawyer for Jeff Peneff, 23, said yesterday that 11 pages of notes detailing his version of events had been seized in a serious breach of lawyer-client confidentiality which threatened his chances of a fair trial. The case was adjourned.

Heavy brigade repels charge

By Gillian Bowditch, Scotland Correspondent

A FARMER accused of letting his animals stray produced his two shire horses in court yesterday as heavyweight witnesses. Jimmy Wilson, 52, who farms on the outskirts of Glasgow, walked the black horses, George and King, five miles through the city and into the marble hallway of Glasgow Sheriff's Court.

Bemused solicitors returning from lunch were told by Mr Wilson: "These are my witnesses." Security guards were powerless in the face of the animals, which each weigh a ton. Mr

Wilson was contemplating how to get his animals into court 19 on the second floor when they produced some motions of their own. They were hastily tethered to railings outside while Mr Wilson was questioned.

While George and King were fed nibs by passers-by, Mr Wilson's civil case continued before Sheriff Hendry.

Glasgow District Council wanted a court order forcing Mr Wilson to keep his horses, pigs, donkeys and cattle from straying on to its land, which is next to his at

Carmyle and Mount Vernon. But Sheriff Hendry said there was no reason to suspect that the animals would cause trouble in the near future and refused the application.

Outside court, Mr Wilson said: "The whole thing was a liberty. I brought my horses so the sheriff could see them. They enjoyed their outing and are used to traffic because they both worked in London and George used to deliver beer to Parliament."

Photograph, page 24

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Mawhinney signals start of Railtrack flotation

By TIM JONES
AND JONATHAN PEYMAN

THE Government yesterday smoothed the path for Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, to make tax cuts before the next election with the announcement that Railtrack is to be sold off within the lifetime of this Parliament.

The announcement led to angry exchanges in the Commons with a warning from Michael Meacher, the shadow Transport Secretary, to prospective shareholders that Labour was totally committed to retaining public control of Britain's rail network.

Dr Brian Mawhinney, the Transport Secretary, said the public company would be floated on the Stock Market as a single unit, allowing everyone the opportunity to buy shares. Some industry analysts claim Railtrack could be worth £6.5 billion, equivalent to a one-off 3p cut in income tax.

Dr Mawhinney said: "The privatisation of Railtrack will be the most significant single step in the overall process of transferring ownership and operation of Britain's railways



Mawhinney: flotation offers best future

to the private sector." He said the Government believed that privatisation offered the best future for Railtrack, for passengers and freight and for train operators.

Privatisation, he said, had been one of the great achievements of the Government since 1979 and had set an example that had been copied around the world.

"It will allow greater use of private sector skills in managing the network, in improving Railtrack stations, in delivering efficient track maintenance and in encouraging

investment in the upgrading of railway lines," he said.

But Mr Meacher said the plan had nothing to do with the dictates of transport policy. "It is driven entirely by the desperate desire of the Government to make a quick financial killing to finance Tory tax cuts in time for the next election."

"I give this warning. Labour is committed to a publicly owned rail system. I say to possible investors: we will not be bound by any undertakings given by this Government to any potential franchisees or potential buyers of Railtrack either about subsidies, length of franchises, franchise conditions, or levels of track access charges."

This privatisation is deeply damaging to the long-term interest of the nation and the travelling public. We will fight tooth and nail to stop it happening."

He said there was nothing to stop Railtrack, which is responsible for 11,000 miles of track, signalling and stations, from indulging in "an orgy of asset stripping" once it was free of government ownership. He gave a warning that any

increase in the charges levied to train-operating companies to allow them to use the track and stations would, following privatisation, lead to higher fares for passengers.

Dr John Marek, Labour MP for Wrexham, said charges would go through the roof once Railtrack was sold.

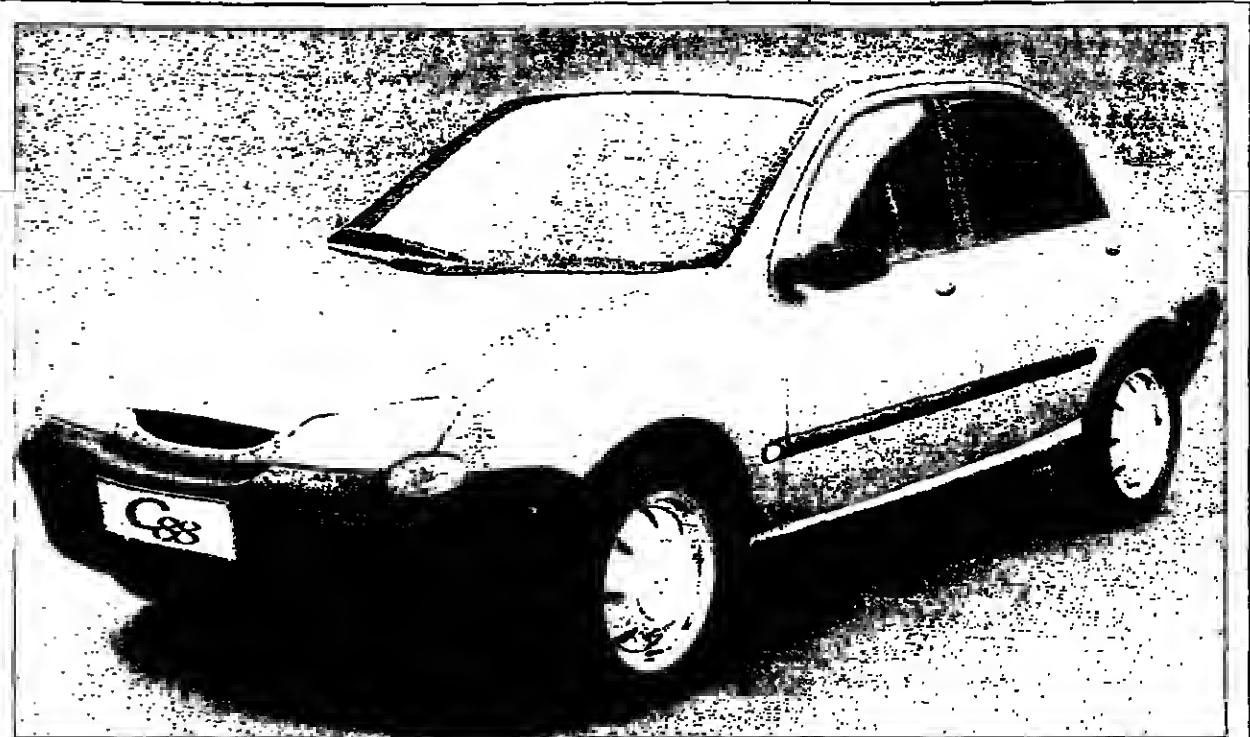
"The real reason the Government is doing this is to gratify some of its sleazy friends in the City by allowing them to develop centre-city sites needed for car parks," he said.

Dr Mawhinney also reaffirmed the government target of franchising a majority of train services by April 1996.

At present, all 25 train service businesses are still run by BR but six of them are operating as shadow franchises to enable prospective purchasers to examine their finances and prospective profitability.

Apart from management and employee buy-out teams, no private sector companies have yet expressed great interest in operating a train service.

Pennington, page 19
Photograph, page 25
Self-off, page 29



Porsche designs a Beetle for Chinese

Porsche, renowned for its expensive sports and racing cars, has returned to its roots with this design for a car that emulates the Volkswagen Beetle, the world's best-selling car, and would cost little over £3,000 (Kevin Eason writes).

Porsche is among 20 manufacturers bidding for a joint venture in China to make as many as 500,000

cars a year from 1996. Ford, Fiat, Citroën, Mercedes and Volkswagen have made bids from Europe but the interest by Porsche has been the most surprising.

Ferdinand Porsche de-

signed the Beetle in 1936 and the original formula has been repeated with the new car, codenamed C88. It is designed to be just as robust and simple to maintain but inexpensive to buy for Chi-

na's growing pool of would-be motorists. The basic car has four doors and a 1.1-litre engine. Porsche has proposed adding other engines, including a diesel, to allow the Chinese to build up export trade. To train Chinese engineers, Porsche says it would give crash courses in German and train them at its headquarters in Germany.

Gallant rescuer wins police praise

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

A MOTORIST who helped to capture a gang of female muggers after they robbed the actress Elizabeth Hurley at knifepoint was praised for his courage by police yesterday. Sammy Latifi, 32, saw Miss Hurley being confronted by the women as he drove his van in West Brompton, West London, in the darkness of Wednesday evening.

The actress had been walking alone along The Little Beltons, close to the flat she shares with the actor Hugh Grant, star of *Four Weddings and a Funeral*.

Without recognising Miss Hurley, Mr Latifi, a milliner from Hendon, north London, stopped to help. He told her to stay with the van and used his mobile telephone to call the police as he chased the four women.

Scotland Yard said: "We don't advise the public to tackle suspects because of the risk that they may be armed, but that takes nothing away from the bravery of this

extremely public-spirited individual."

Four unemployed teenagers will appear before Horseferry Road magistrates today accused of robbing Miss Hurley of £10 and a handbag. They are Sheeneen Margaret Johnson, 18, of Bethnal Green, east London, and three 17-year-olds, one from West Ham, one from Bethnal Green and another of no fixed address.



Hurley: robbed as she walked home alone

Hotel plan for County Hall 'insult to Britain'

By RACHEL KELLY
PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

THE controversy over one of London's most elegant landmarks, County Hall, intensified yesterday as its Japanese owners explained why they intended to develop part of the site as a "Pacific Asia" centre.

The previous plan was to develop the top floors of the 70 year-old building as a hotel jointly managed by the Richard Branson's Virgin Group. Mr Branson is furious at the change of plan and has demanded an "urgent" explanation.

Kenzo Honda, the managing director of Shiryama Shokusan, the Japanese owners, said the firm had modified its plans in response to criticism that it was "insulting" to use such a famous British landmark as a hotel.

Leading article, page 21

Drowning victim had received hate mail

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

A MAN who was found drowned in a river near his home had suffered an eight-year hate campaign of telephone calls and letters, his family said yesterday.

An inquest on Gavin Gillam, a 28-year-old carpet worker, was opened and adjourned yesterday but his family has blamed his death on the hundreds of threatening anonymous letters, some containing razor blades.

Mr Gillam disappeared from his home in Kidderminster, Hereford and Worcester, after arguing with his mother over whether they should remove their number from the telephone book. His body was discovered in the river Stour 13 days later by anglers.

A man was arrested two years ago in connection with the letter campaign, but was released without charge.



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I'm going straight, crimewave boy says

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE boy blamed for a crime wave that is driving traders in a Yorkshire town out of business said yesterday that he intends to go straight in the future.

The 14-year-old, who has 130 convictions for burglary and vandalism, blamed boredom and a lack of pocket money for his behaviour. Speaking on GMTV the boy, who is too young to be identified, said: "I have nothing to do and I don't have much pocket money, so I just went round burgling."

Traders in his home town of Elland, West Yorkshire, have written to Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, asking for help to keep the boy off the streets. Mr Howard told the Commons yesterday that the courts would have greater powers to deal with young offenders when all the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act came into force.

Howard attacked by child law expert over Bulger case

By A STAFF REPORTER

A LEADING children's lawyer has criticised the decision of Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, that the children who murdered James Bulger should be locked up for at least 15 years.

Allan Levy, QC, a recorder and child law expert who wrote the 1991 "Pindown" report on the use of restraint in children's homes, also said that government plans for secure training centres for children were the product of "discredited thinking".

In an article published yesterday by the civil liberties organisation Justice, of which he is a council member, Mr Levy said there seemed to be "a kind of campaign against some children in which the fact of childhood is no longer apparently to be considered relevant".

When Robert Thompson and John Venables — both aged ten when they killed two-year-old James — were detained at Her Majesty's pleasure a



Levy: criticised use of adversarial process

year ago, the trial judge, Mr Justice Morland, recommended at least eight years' detention. Lord Justice Taylor of Gossforth, the Lord Chief Justice, suggested a ten-year minimum. Mr Howard later recommended a term of at least 15 years, which means they must serve some time in prison. James's parents have said Venables and Thompson should be locked up for life.

Some newspapers had

claimed that Mr Howard had been acting for political ends. Mr Levy wrote, adding: "The appearance of a political act is surely enough to disqualify him [Mr Howard] from his role." Mr Levy said that in any case it was likely that the sentences on Thompson and Venables would eventually be considered by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Mr Levy also criticised the way the two boys had been subjected to "the full adversarial process of a major criminal prosecution" and said the media exposure had been "inexcusable".

Turning to the secure training units for 12 to 14-year-olds, introduced under the Criminal Justice Act, Mr Levy said: "Their appearance is a retrograde step of a high order and is based on outmoded thinking which was discredited years ago. All the available evidence points to the centres being plagued by bullying and self-harm and generating more offending."



Annabel Croft with Amber yesterday: "I'm slimmer now than before I had her"

Tennis star serves up healthy diet for mothers

By ROBIN YOUNG

ANNABEL Croft, the former tennis player, shared her recipe for healthy motherhood yesterday. As soon as she learnt that she was pregnant, she cut out fatty foods and increased her calcium intake with lots of milk and yoghurt.

Ms Croft took along her seven-month-old baby Amber when she opened a conference in London on the importance of nutrition during pregnancy. She told how she switched to fortified breakfast foods and took food supplements to ensure essential nutrients.

Ms Croft, a former winner of the Wimbledon junior title, added that she played tennis until she was three months pregnant and after that took daily 24 mile walks on Wimbledon Common, which she resumed as quickly as possible after Amber was born. "As a result I am slimmer now than I was before I had the baby,"

Professor David Barker of the Medical Research Council said a mother's nutrition affected her baby's vulnerability to coronary heart disease and stroke in later life.

BBC makes radio's future crystal clear

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE BBC will transmit its five radio networks in CD quality, free of interference, from next September, the first broadcaster to do so worldwide.

With the launch of Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) the BBC will also routinely broadcast Commons debates in their entirety, Liz Forgan, director of BBC Network Radio, announced yesterday. DAB is an additional service on medium and long waves. Miss Forgan said: "Good reception will no longer depend on adjusting aerials or moving receivers. The Proms will be crystal clear, even in a car."

A spokesman for the Heritage Department confirmed yesterday the existence of Government plans for five commercial radio stations to follow the move to DAB.

Digital Audio Broadcasting uses narrower bands than the

present analogue system and the BBC is planning to fill additional space with more parliamentary coverage. Miss Forgan said: "DAB offers the chance for listeners to have access to parliament on a scale which the BBC has never before been able to offer."

Sports coverage will also be extended, she said. "This will be an enhancement to our FM service; some additional live cricket, the opportunity to broadcast commentary from more than one football match at the same time, or to give coverage from a second court at Wimbledon."

A spokesman for Philips said that in the immediate future radio manufacturers would not be able to meet the expected demand for DAB receivers, mass produced versions of which are likely to cost several hundred pounds.

Lottery on course for £5 m jackpot

By BILL FROST

PUBLIC enthusiasm for the National Lottery shows no sign of diminishing with ticket sales this week of over £18 million and a jackpot of about £5 million forecast.

Camelot, the lottery operator, said the top prize money projection was £1million more than expected. David Rigg, its director of communications, was more than satisfied with the public's response, saying sales continued at a very strong level. "As expected, the pattern this week appears to be settling into a more normal routine with a relatively slow start and sales picking up as the week progresses," he said.

"Nonetheless, we are seeing sales continuing at a very strong level. Sales for this week's draw now exceed £18 million. The final level of jackpot will obviously depend

on sales between now and 7.30 on Saturday evening. In addition the jackpot can vary depending on the number of winners at the lower prize levels."

Public irritation over the shortage of terminals had been addressed too, with a further 700 brought on line, Camelot said. "The enthusiasm of the nation for the lottery seems undiminished this week and total sales, while certain to be lower than at the launch last week, are running ahead of our expectations," Mr Rigg said.

Camelot is hoping that the lottery will produce its first multi-millionaire tomorrow. Last week the consortium's hopes were dashed when seven winners shared the £58 million jackpot. More than 1.1 million people shared a prize pool of £22 million.

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Someone Cares

Chip fault raises worldwide fears of computer errors

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

A FAULT in a silicon chip used in millions of computers has raised fears of errors around the world, with doubts over work by everyone from surgeons to NASA scientists.

Intel, maker of the best-selling Pentium chip, has admitted to a "subtle flaw" that affects the accuracy of long division. It had little choice but to confess because Internet, through which computer bugs communicate, has been humming with angry letters since the flaw was first discovered.

Dr Peter Burridge, a statistician at Birmingham University, said that computer users were "boiling with rage". Some are questioning whether months of work may need to be thrown away. "Any numerical work which is at all critical will have to be checked against another computer with a different chip in it," he said.

Apart from irritating professionals, chip flaws of this sort could have implications for the public. "What about aircraft that depend on computers and chips, such as the Airbus?" Harold Thimbleby, a professor of computing at the University of Middlesex, said. "What about the surgeons who use computer spreadsheets? They haven't got time to query the results."

Intel has heavily promoted the Pentium chip since its

launch in March last year. It hopes to sell up to seven million this year, and they are used in computers produced by most manufacturers including IBM, Dell and Compaq.

For most users, the flaw will never make itself known. It arises in "double precision floating point divides", division calculations in which the user wants high precision. Such calculations are common

in statistics, mathematics and economics, and to outsiders the error may appear small. In the worst cases so far quoted, it affects the fifth place of decimals — that is, the fifth digit to the right of the decimal point.

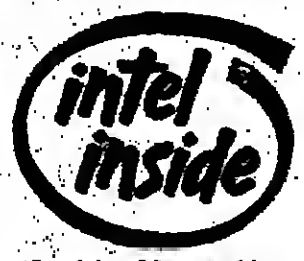
The fault was disclosed by Professor Thomas Nicely, a mathematician at Lynchburg College in Virginia. Intel said it was the first time anyone had found a fault. However, Dr William

Kahan, a mathematician and computer scientist at the University of California at Berkeley, said that some people might find an error in their work but not realise what had caused it.

"Would they be able to figure it out? Is it the chip or is it something else? Should they re-do the computation? If they re-do it and get the same answer, what are they to think then?" Dr Kahan said.

Intel said that the flaw had been corrected in later chips. Faults in chips are much commoner than thought, according to Professor Thimbleby. "The novel thing this time is that they've come clean about it," he said. "Faults in chips are very widespread and customers are usually fobbed off by being told that it's their fault, they must have done something wrong. The whole industry is a disaster area."

A mathematics software manufacturer, MathWorks, is distributing a modification to its MATLAB programme designed to compensate for the flaw. But that may slow the operation of the chip, which has been heavily promoted on its speed. MathWorks said that some people using its software at NASA's jet propulsion laboratory were worried that the Pentium chip would cause errors. Precise calculations are crucial in space missions.



Intel: its chips used in millions of computers

Hi-tech Turpins ride the superhighway

By NICK NUTTALL
TECHNOLOGY
CORRESPONDENT

THEFT of information from computers has become the high-technology crime of the late 20th century as society comes to rely increasingly on the information superhighway.

The recently disclosed BT case involved unauthorised access to computer files by an employee who abused his position rather than a traditional case of hacking. But anyone with a personal computer, a modem and access to the public telephone lines can, in theory, become a computer criminal.

The would-be hacker can buy telephone numbers to data bases such as those at universities, research centres and company headquarters. Gadgets that randomly try thousands of possible passwords can be bought to reduce the tedium of manually tapping out possible entry words.

Passwords to many sensitive databases are often simple names. They can also be generic passwords, installed at the computer maker's factory, which should have been changed on delivery. Once a hacker has broken the code he or she can wander through databases to learn the telephone numbers of more important databases and passwords. Hackers can also alter files or copy them down the telephone.

Alarm over hacking has intensified with the spread of Internet, a largely unregulated computer network that links millions of users



The art of the hacker has been glamorised in several films including WarGames

worldwide, exposing more electronic files to unauthorised perusal.

Gerry Penfold, a security expert at KPMG, the management consultants, said yesterday that the BT case had highlighted "the lack of awareness of simple security measures".

"There are still many companies where employees share passwords or do not change them frequently," he said. A survey by KPMG of

138 FTSE 500 companies has found that 25 per cent of mainframe computers, 35 per cent of mini computers and 79 per cent of personal computers have inadequate security and are vulnerable to internal or outside attack.

"It has deteriorated from our last survey two years ago. During the recession a lot of people take their eye off the ball. Controls, training and security all go on the back burner," Mr Penfold

said. He said many firms had good security programmes that search for people trying passwords or strange patterns of computer use, but that staff charged with monitoring security equipment often looked at printouts only two or three weeks later. "By that time it is often too late," Mr Penfold said.

Computer crime, which includes theft and the malicious installation of comput-

er viruses, is estimated to cost industry £400 million a year without counting the expense of repairing systems. Computer viruses are rogue programmes that hide in a system to be triggered at a later date to damage or wipe electronic files.

Several prominent cases of hacking have been reported in the past few years. Paul Bedworth, a 19-year-old student, hacked into the White House system, the EC, the Financial Times and Tokyo Zoo using a £200 computer his mother gave him as a birthday present. He was cleared of three charges after he proved no criminal intent.

A male nurse who hacked into the computer of a Liverpool hospital and prescribed potentially lethal drugs was jailed for 12 months last year.

A 15-year-old schoolboy sparked a security scare when he hacked his way into a £20 million BT computer and gained access to four million ex-directory customers in 1991.

A 16-year-old used his school computer in the same year to read top-secret weapons information in the Ministry of Defence's system and Australian student Richard Jones, 23, shut down the US space agency's data systems last year for 24 hours because of his "addiction" to hacking.

"Data rape" was identified last year as the ability to make telephone calls and make someone else pay the bill via the 0800 freephone system.

BT hacking, page 1

Doctors find added risk for Pill users

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

WOMEN taking the contraceptive Pill are at much greater risk of suffering blood clots if they carry a particular genetic mutation, a team of Dutch doctors has discovered.

About one in 25 of the population carries the mutation, which makes the blood more likely to clot. Such people are about eight times more likely to suffer from deep-vein thrombosis, a potentially fatal disorder in which soft blood clots form in the deep veins, usually in the legs.

Use of the Pill generally increases the risk about fourfold but it rises dramatically in women who carry the gene and take the Pill: such women, the team says in *The Lancet* this week, "will have a risk of venous thrombosis about 30 times that of a non-user who does not carry the mutation".

Fewer than one woman in 10,000 a year would get the condition if she was not a Pill user and did not have the

mutation. But more than 28 per 10,000 would suffer venous thrombosis if they had both risk factors, the Dutch work shows. However, the absolute risk of deep-vein thrombosis is still quite low even in women with both risk factors.

In women who have already had the condition, the researchers say that the increased risk should be explained to the woman, who may be advised to stop using the Pill and tell her mother and sisters, who may share the same risk.

Doctors handling heart attack cases were urged to brush up on life-saving techniques in a report published today.

A study by a team at Cardiff Royal Infirmary, published in the *British Medical Journal*, found that less than half of the 113 doctors questioned at 62 hospitals in England and Wales knew even the first stages of treatment.

Baby found hanging by pyjama top

By A STAFF REPORTER

A BABY was strangled by his pyjama top after falling from his cot, an inquest was told yesterday. The 22-month-old boy was found by his mother when she went to wake him.

Jenny Bennett-Bound, of Hythe, Hampshire, has since needed psychiatric care and was too distressed to attend her son's funeral or the inquest at Southampton. Her statement, read to the hearing, said that half an hour after putting Andrew to bed he climbed out of his cot, "which he did all the time", and came downstairs. She put him back to bed.

After her husband went to work at 5.40am next day she found their son hanging from the outside of his cot by his pyjama shirt. He was cold and appeared lifeless.

Keith Wiseman, the coroner, recorded a verdict of accidental death. The couple have another son aged three.

Mike Oldfield

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Prison staff told to stop shopping for inmates

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

PRISON staff in England and Wales have been ordered to stop shopping for food, toiletries and luxury goods for inmates as part of a drive to toughen discipline and conditions in prisons.

Derek Lewis, director general of the Prison Service, issued a written instruction yesterday to governors in all 133 jails that shopping for inmates must end by the end of next month.

The order was made in the wake of Michael Howard's announcement last month that privileges in jails must be earned and that unchecked access to payphones on the landings of many prisons would end. The Home Secretary, whose aim is to make prisons "decent but austere" said: "The public neither understands nor tolerates the sort of excesses that we have had reported recently."

Earlier this month prisoners at Frankland jail near Durham were told that they had until December 17 to place orders at shops outside the prison gates. Among the items on their shopping lists were

steak, electrical goods, cheeses and smoked salmon. As a result of yesterday's written instruction it is expected that most top-security prisoners, including convicted IRA terrorists, will not be able to send officers and prison auxiliaries out with shopping lists for Christmas treats.

One prison officer said: "It was sickening for the staff because the men have been buying things which the staff

can't afford for their own families."

David Hines, chairman of the North East Victims Association, said: "It is marvellous news that the shopping trips will be cancelled. Prison should be a punishment first and foremost."

In future men and women held in Britain's six dispersal jails, which hold the most dangerous prisoners, will have to buy goods not sold in

prison shops from catalogues or ask their families to provide them. Prison service sources said last night that catalogue shopping would be monitored to prevent prisoners sending for luxury goods.

They will be able to choose items from a list of goods that will only include toiletries but will exclude luxury items or foodstuffs. A cash limit is also to be imposed on what prisoners can order from catalogues.

The move to ban prison officers and auxiliaries shopping for prisoners was fuelled by ministerial embarrassment at reports that prisoners in Whitemoor top-security jail near March, Cambridgeshire, had been eating lobster take-aways and wearing expensive training shoes ordered by telephone.

Prison officers from the jail, where five IRA terrorists attempted to escape in September, were making regular shopping trips to Peterborough, 22 miles away, after taking orders from inmates for foods such as pasta, Italian cold meats, coffee and amaretto biscuits.

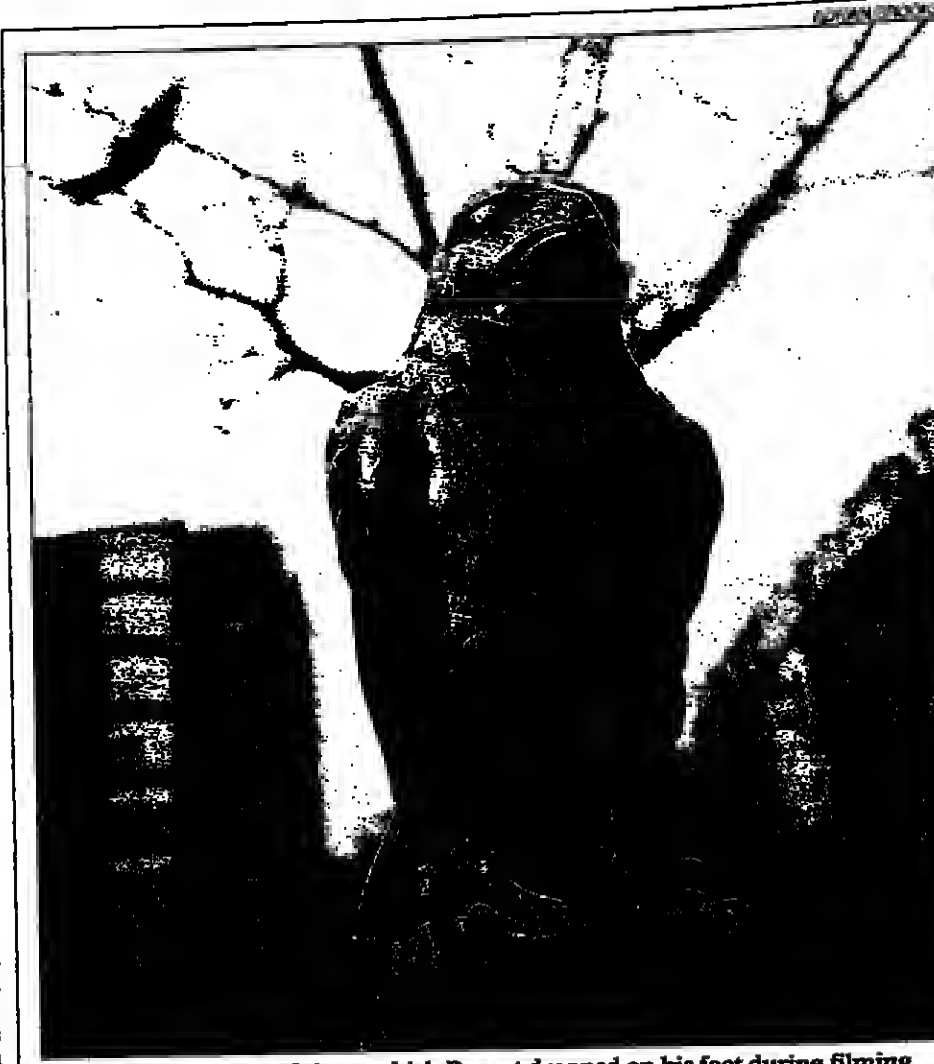
Social workers to care for remand teenagers

SOCIAL workers are to look after teenagers held on remand in an adult prison after fears that the youths felt intimidated and might commit suicide (Richard Ford writes).

Senior social workers will be seconded to Hull prison, where two 15-year-old boys and 11 aged 16 are being held because of a shortage of local authority secure accommodation. Prison officers had

expressed concern about the welfare of the boys, who they say continually make mischief and annoy other inmates.

Robert Lake, director of social services at Humberside County Council, said the action did not mean that the authorities were "going soft" on juvenile crime. His staff would help offenders to settle in by explaining the practices of prison life, he said.



The 45lb Maltese Falcon, which Bogart dropped on his foot during filming



Bogart film was his first starring role

Film falcon up for sale

CHRISTIE'S is to sell one of the most important Hollywood icons ever offered at auction — the Maltese Falcon — the statuette from the 1941 classic film starring Humphrey Bogart (Dalya Alberge writes).

The 11lb lead falcon, weighing 45lb, is expected to sell for £50,000 on December 6 in New York, even though it was shown only briefly during the film. It was Bogart's first major starring role and he accidentally dropped the falcon on his foot during filming. The statuette comes from the estate of William Conrad, the actor and director.

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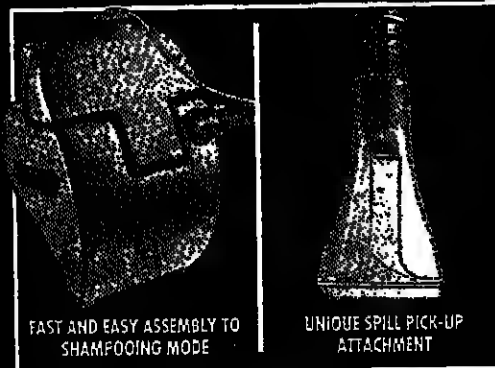
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♠ 6	♥ 10 8 6 5	♦ 5 2	♣ K Q 10 6 5 3
♠ A K Q 10 5 4 2	♥ J 7 6	♦ 9 7 4	♣ 3
♠ A J 4 3	♥ A K Q 10 9 3	♦ J 8	♣ 10

W N E S
Pass ♠ 6 ♠ 4 ♠ 1 ♠ 5
What should West lead?

By ROBERT SHEEHAN
BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

(1) A "Lightner" double. The theory is that when opponents have freely bid a slam they are unlikely to fail by more than one trick; therefore a normal penalty double is unlikely to gain much. So a common conventional treatment of the double by the defender not on lead is to ask partner to choose an unusual lead — in particular not a suit bid by the defenders, nor a trump. Often the doubler has a side-suit void and it is frequently correct for the leader to try his longest suit.

Answer: On this deal from the 1988 Olympiad Teams, West decided to lead clubs as that was his longest suit, so declarer made his doubled slam with no difficulty.

West should have reasoned

as follows:

(i) If I lead a heart and East is void in clubs, declarer may still not have twelve tricks — after all he cannot expect to make many tricks in the black suits.

(ii) If I lead a club and East is void in hearts, I will certainly have let the contract home. On that basis hearts looks a better bet.

Macallan Pairs
The Macallan International Bridge Pairs Championship, in association with *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*, will be held at the White House Hotel, Albany Street, London NW1, from January 25-27.

For details and tickets contact the English Bridge Union, Broadfields, Bicester Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP19 3BG (tel 0296 394141).

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Paris round-up

A considerable number of fascinating games were produced by the Intel Speed Chess tournament in Paris. Michael Adams, England's second-ranked grandmaster, was knocked out in record time by the Icelandic grandmaster Johann Hjartarson.

White: Adams
Black: Hjartarson
Paris Intel Grand Prix, 1994

Sicilian Defence	White resigns
1 e4 c5	23 Bc4 Kg7
2 Nf3 e6	24 Bb5 Kg7
3 d4 cxd4	25 Nf1 Rg6
4 Nxd4 a6	26 d5 Bb6
5 Bb3 Bc7	27 Bc4 Bc4
6 Nc3 Nc6	28 Qc4 Qc7
7 Qc2 Ng7	29 Rd1 Qc7
8 Qc3 Ng7	30 Qb6 Bc3
9 Bc2	31 Rf7 Ng8+
10 0-0-0	32 Nc3 Nc6
11 f4	33 Kf3 Qc5
12 Nc4 Bc7	
13 Bc7 Nc7	
14 e5 Bc4	
15 f5 Nc5	
16 cxd6 0-0	
17 Bc5 Qc5	
18 Kf1 Qc5	
19 Rf1 Bb6	

King's Indian

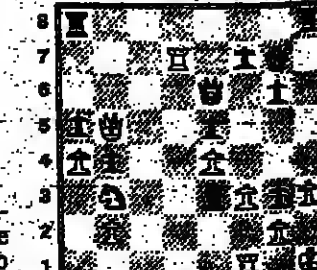
Kasparov employed his favourite King's Indian Defence to demolish the player who had convincingly won the qualifying tournament for the Paris Intel Grand Prix, ahead of both Nigel Short and Jon Speelman.

White: Arkhakov
Black: Kasparov
Paris Intel Grand Prix, 1994

King's Indian Defence

1 d4 Nf6

Diagram of final position



On move 33, White was unable to capture the black queen due to the threat of ... Rb2 mate. In the final position, White has an edge to 34... Rb2, which will make swifly.

Winning Move, page 8

Accident victims get unfair deal in small claims, Mackay told

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

ACCIDENT victims are being forced to fight for compensation in "do-it-yourself" courts without the help of lawyers because the Lord Chancellor wants people with claims of less than £1,000 to go through the cheaper small claims court, where they have to bring cases at their own expense, legal experts say.

Lawyers are already turning away people with accident claims and they warn the Lord Chancellor that thousands of injured people will be denied their rightful damages. The small claims court is unsuitable for accident claims, they say, because people need legal help when up against big insurance companies. The

Lord Chancellor is also considering raising the limit for small claims to at least £2,000, which would mean thousands more small accident cases being moved from the county to the small claims court.

Parrick Allen, member of the Association of Personal Injuries, which, with other groups, is lodging objections with Lord Mackay of Clashfern, said he had started to turn away accident victims. The lady was a 36-year-old charity worker who was knocked off her bicycle by a car in Regent's Park on her way to work.

"It was not straightforward; there was some dispute about the sum being in the motorist's

eyes and with the best will in the world she would probably not get more than £800."

He was unable to take her on, he said, because a recent Court of Appeal ruling now adopted by the Lord Chancellor as policy on small personal injury claims says such cases are suitable for the small claims court, where no legal costs are allowed. If he took up the woman's case and pursued it in the county court, he risked not recovering any costs if the judge then decided it should have gone to the small claims court.

"The effect of the Court of Appeal ruling therefore is that it will be all but impossible for such plaintiffs to obtain solicitors to advise with such claims," Mr Allen said. "Everyone is absolutely up in arms about it. We thought that the Lord Chancellor had accepted the principle that small personal injury cases were unsuitable for small claims arbitration. But it now seems as if there has been a complete reversal. It is pretty scandalous; thousands of people will simply be denied access to justice."

Only those eligible for legal aid under the green form scheme (limited to people on income support) could obtain legal advice, he added. Mr Allen said that in the small claims court it would be difficult if not impossible for people to gather the necessary medical evidence when making an accident claim.

"At present 90 per cent of these claims are settled by solicitors and they don't even get to court. Instead the small claims court would be swamped with work, but people would be worse off because they would not succeed in winning their claims."

The Court of Appeal ruling came after a long-running battle between groups such as the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers, the Law Society and the TUC. Lord Mackay conceded that his proposals might lead to injustice and he was consulting on how to enable some legal costs to be allowed in such cases.

Victims' benefits, page 12

Silcott proposed as union president

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A PROPOSAL to make Winston Silcott, who was cleared of murdering PC Keith Blakelock during the Broadwater Farm riots, honorary president of a union branch brought a storm of protests from politicians and trade unionists last night.

Silcott, 35, who is serving a life sentence for the murder of a boxer at a party, was to be put up as a figurehead for a campaign against "state racism" by Unison, the public service union.

Conservative and Labour politicians joined trade unionists to attack the proposal, which was put before the union's local government branch in Bradford. Bob Bryar, Unison's branch secretary, said that 99 per cent of members were against it.

The motion was discussed at the branch's annual general meeting and deferred to an executive meeting next month. It was proposed by Isabelle Jamin, a shop steward in Bradford council careers department, and seconded by another shop steward, Colin Braithwaite, from the fostering and adoption department.



Silcott: figurehead for anti-racism campaign

It describes Silcott as a "political hostage", adding that his "ten-year fight for justice is an outstanding example for any trade union activist engaged in the struggle against all forms of exploitation and oppression."

At the trial earlier this year of two police officers cleared of conspiring to pervert the course of justice, Silcott was described as playing a leading role in the murder of PC Blakelock. Silcott's conviction for his murder was quashed on appeal in 1991 after police statements were found to have been tampered with.



Three of the last keepers of the Needles lighthouse, whose lonely vigils end today

Lighthouse men switch off

BY ANJANA AHUJA

SHIPS sailing near the Needles lighthouse will no longer be guided by human hand from today when the 135-year-old tower on the Isle of Wight becomes automated.

Six lighthouse keepers who used to operate the beacon in the Solent have been replaced by equipment costing £350,000 and will move to other lighthouses on the mainland.

The keepers worked in teams of three on alternate month-long shifts, taking all their provisions with them.

The keeper on duty used to work alone on an eight-hour shift, operating the beacon and the foghorn and watching for distress signals so he could alert the coastguard.

All lighthouses in England, Wales and the Channel Islands should be automated by the turn of the century, bringing to an end a profession born in 1609 with the building of the first lighthouse in Lowestoft. Navigation will be carried out remotely from a central operations room and the only human presence in the

towers will be maintenance engineers.

Gerry Douglas-Sherwood, 46, the principal keeper, and Paul Davis, 36, his assistant, said they were leaving with few regrets and were looking forward to spending more time at home. "I have been a keeper at the Needles for 12 years but accept automation is a natural progression," Mr Douglas-Sherwood said.

Their departure leaves the Hanois lighthouse in Guernsey as the last manned offshore lighthouse. The keepers there will leave in 1996.

Sleeping Beauty heads ITV Christmas schedule

BY A STAFF REPORTER

ITV has paid more than £1 million to secure the British television premiere of Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* on Christmas Day. The 1959 film will be screened in the tea-time slot and the evening will be given over to successful series including *Coronation Street* and *Heartbeat*.

The decision is a departure from screening a Hollywood blockbuster on Christmas night. Marcus Plantin, ITV Network Centre director, said: "There is a place in a centrepiece on Christmas Day for classic animation and we are delighted to do the deal with Disney." *Coronation Street* will run in its traditional 7.30pm slot on Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

ITV has also bought the rights to *Cool Runnings*, about a Jamaican bobsleigh team competing in the Olympics, which will be screened within the next two years.

Mr Plantin admitted yesterday that last year's ITV Christmas and New Year programmes were disappointing. "We didn't have all the right building blocks for a totally satisfactory schedule," he said. "But that's history - ITV is back on form with all guns blazing at this very special time."

□ BBC's *Neighbours* was yesterday criticised by the Broadcasting Standards Council for a scene in which a woman dressed up as a schoolgirl to seduce her husband.

The BBC said the episode, involving husband and wife characters Julie and Philip Martin, had been edited to reduce sexual innuendo but the council accepted viewers' complaints that it was too risqué for children.

The council also criticised ITV's *Downwardly Mobile* for a "racially offensive" reference, in which one of the characters said a kitchen floor was the sort "you can keep clean just by wiping a wet Filipino over it".

Yorkshire Television, which makes the series, said it was a "caricature of spoilt and selfish people" and the offensive comment was not an endorsement of racism.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Accused bodybuilder is bailed

An international bodybuilder charged with murdering a former British junior road race cycling champion has been given bail by Bradford magistrates. Steven Johnson, 29, a former Mr UK, of Keighley, West Yorkshire, is charged with murdering David Raynor, 27, of Thackley, West Yorkshire, in a nightclub on November 14.

Footballer fined

A pub team footballer who punched an opponent from a team called Christians in Sport was fined £100 and ordered to pay him £200 compensation. Paul McDonagh, of Luton, was convicted of grievous bodily harm.

Yard man bailed

Peter Hare, a Scodand yard scenes of crimes officer arrested after smugglers allegedly used sealed police exhibit bags to beat sniffer dogs, was released on bail.

Beecham to go

Sir Jeremy Beecham, 50, is to resign as Labour leader of Newcastle upon Tyne City Council. He is to continue as chairman of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities.

Rapist appeals

The 14-year-old boy who avoided a prison sentence after being found guilty of rape because he was only 13 at the time is to appeal against his conviction.

Fishermen saved

Four fishermen in liferafts were rescued by helicopter yesterday after their Padstow-registered vessel sank 18 miles north of Trevose Head, Cornwall.

Plant car park

A car park at Mudeford, Dorset, has been declared a site of special scientific interest after sea knot grass, thought to be extinct in Britain, was found growing in the tarmac.

Bears fail to sell

Two teddy bears, one black and one blue and valued at £55,000 each, failed to sell at Sotheby's, London, yesterday. They were made by the German manufacturer Steiff.

"Make it 65 million."

"That's Madness!"

Don't worry John, it's not the British Gas salary rises Hezza is referring to. It is in fact the square miles of the Earth's surface covered by the Pacific Ocean. And, by the way, that was the British Band of "Nurty Boys" that split in 1986.

Trivial Pursuit

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Hundreds of babies given excessive dose of TB vaccine

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 800 new-born babies were given five times the normal dose of a tuberculosis vaccine because of a hospital error, health officials disclosed yesterday.

The babies, none more than a few days old, were given the vaccine at St Mary's Hospital, Manchester, as part of a routine immunisation programme. The error emerged when some showed unusual reactions and GPs referred them back to the hospital for checks.

In a statement yesterday, St Mary's, an NHS trust, moved to calm parents' fears and said an inquiry into how the error occurred was under way. The vaccination against tuberculosis, known as a BCG, was given to 856 babies between August and the beginning of this month.

Letters have been sent to parents and a telephone helpline set up. Parents who want their babies checked have been invited to take them

to a special clinic. Professor Malcolm Chiswick, the hospital's clinical director, said yesterday: "We have apologised to all parents for our mistake and they are being reassured that their babies' health is not at risk."

"In a small minority of cases parents may notice a stronger than usual local reaction at the site of the injection and this may take a little longer to heal than the usual two to three months," the professor said.

A spokeswoman for St Mary's said a baby would normally react with a slight reddening of the skin and a small scab. "A normal blister would be about 8 millimetres across but doctors are advising parents to bring in any baby with a blister more than 10 millimetres across," she said.

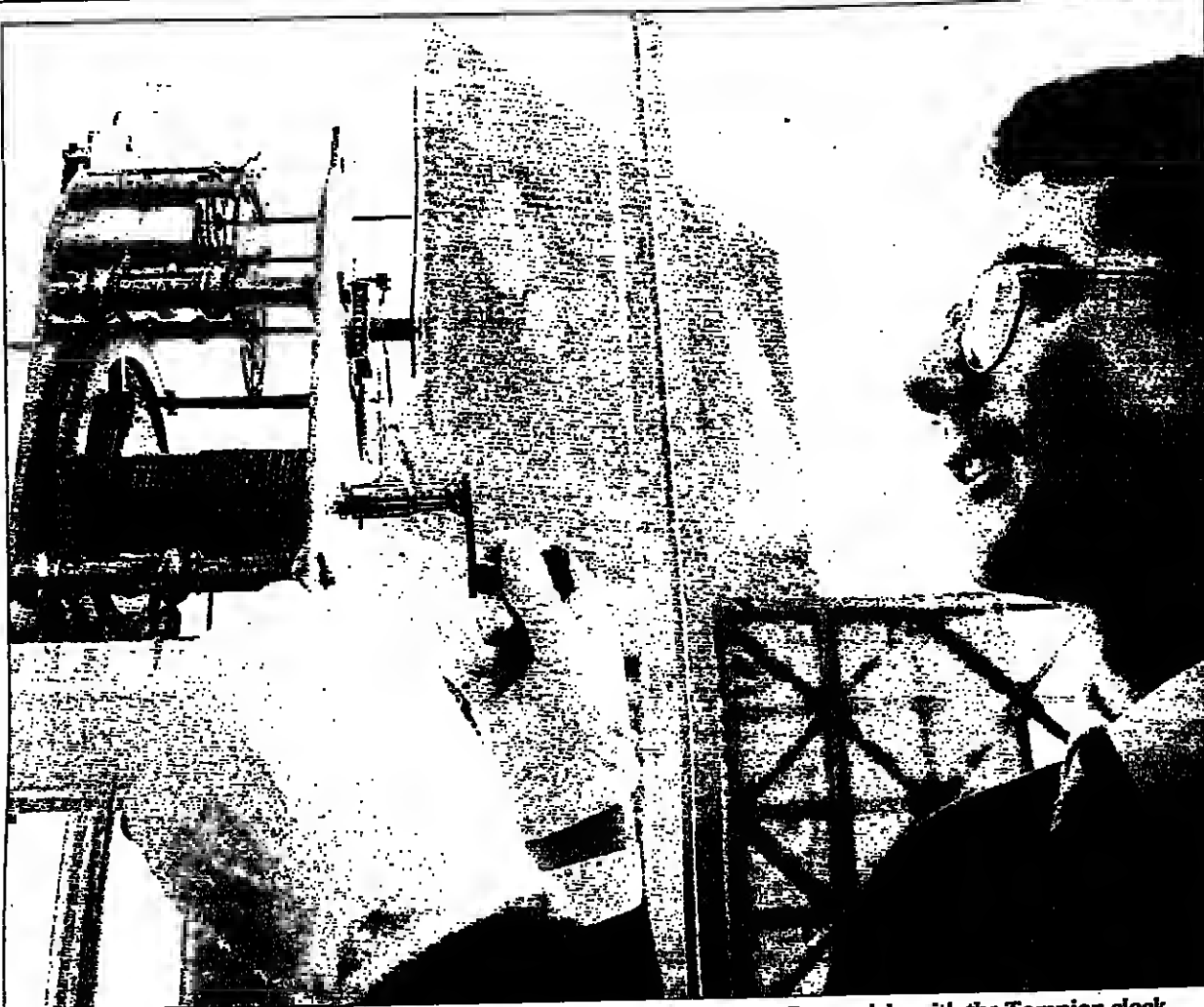
The concentrated vaccine is supplied to the hospital in phials containing ten doses ready for dilution. The spokeswoman said: "There has been

a mistake but it would be wrong to pre-empt the result of the inquiry into exactly how this happened."

BCG vaccinations are normally given to children at secondary school but the increase in cases of tuberculosis in recent years has led some hospitals to offer the vaccination to new-born babies. The immunisation programme at St Mary's has been suspended while the inquiry takes place but the hospital said the long-term policy of offering the vaccinations would not be affected.

Eclampsia, a disease that can lead to convulsions and death, affects nearly one in 2,000 pregnant women, according to a study in the *British Medical Journal*.

The first national survey since 1922 shows that a third of those who develop it will suffer major medical complications and one in 50 will die. Researchers have called for better screening.



Jonathan Betts, curator of horology at the Old Royal Observatory at Greenwich, with the Tompion clock

Clock that helped map the world goes home

By A STAFF REPORTER

A CLOCK that was instrumental in proving that the Earth rotated at a constant rate — thus aiding accurate navigation — is returning to its original home after 275 years. The device, which needs winding only once a year, was made by Thomas Tompion — the father of English clockmaking — and is returning to the Old Royal Observatory in Greenwich, southeast London.

It will be placed in its original setting in the Octagon Room, designed by Sir Christopher Wren to house Tompion's clocks.

Before 1676 it was not certain that the Earth rotated at an even rate: confirmation was needed before astronomers, geographers and navigators could trust their astronomical readings for map-making. To settle the matter, the first Astronomer Royal commissioned clocks from Tompion that were revolutionary in design.

Consumers urged to boycott turkey

By MICHAEL HORNSEY AND MARIANNE CURPHEY

ANIMAL welfare campaigners yesterday urged consumers not to buy turkey this Christmas because of the methods used to rear the birds. The appeal came as a supermarket price war intensified: frozen turkeys are selling for up to 6p a lb less than last year.

Animal Aid said the intensive rearing of turkeys, designed to put on breast flesh at the maximum rate, had created birds so top-heavy they suffered foot and leg injuries and disease, and could not mate naturally.

In a report released yesterday, the group highlighted the "mutilation" of male turkeys for artificial insemination of the females.

Andrew Tyler, one of the report's authors, said: "If consumers had more information about how poultry in general is produced they might think twice about buying it. Consumers have a big part to play in improving welfare."

The British Turkey Federation, which represents 95 per cent of turkey producers, said all its members adhered to guidelines laid down by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Scalded woman died from lack of care

By A STAFF REPORTER

A WOMAN aged 25 but with a mental age of five, who was scalded to death in a bath, died accidentally "in circumstances of lack of care", an inquest jury ruled yesterday. Joanne Sourbouts, died in Merseyside's Whiston Hospital 15 days after the accident at The Poplars Bungalow residential care home in Southport, Merseyside, on May 5.

Staff at the home, run by Sefton Council, said that Joanne had run the bath herself but Joanne's father, Richard Sourbouts, of Southport, claimed she would not have been capable of doing so. Gordon Glasgow, the coroner, reminded the jury that there had been a problem with the hot-water system at the home for four years.

Sefton Council was recently fined £18,000 after admitting exposing residents at the home to health and safety risks by not controlling the water temperature. It also offered to settle a civil claim by the family for an undisclosed sum.

Graham Haywood, chief executive of Sefton Council, said the council was considering disciplinary action against staff at the home.

Party snacks on menu

By CATHERINE MILTON

IF YOU want some delicious cooking this weekend buy oysters, quails' eggs and snails. These are ingredients for party snacks devised by Frances Bissell. *The Times* cook, whose recipes will appear in the 24-page Christmas food and drink special in *The Magazine* tomorrow.

Sainsbury's and Waitrose sell Pacific cup oysters at 49p each and quails' eggs at £1.19 a dozen. Harrods has frozen snails with garlic butter at £3.95 for 12, about the same price as delicatessens.

Frozen turkeys are about 40p a lb, less than last year's price. At Asda, Tesco, Sainsbury's and Sainsbury's. Fresh turkeys are £1.19 a lb at Asda and Sainsbury's.

Advertised best buys: Asda: beef brisket £1.79 a lb; McVitties St Clements cheese

cake £1.49; cherry tomatoes 89p for 500g.

Budgens: honey roast ham 49p a lb; value pack mushrooms 99p for 454g.

Co-op: Young's peeled prawns £3.49 for 400g; Petit Filous peach and apricot 89p for 89g.

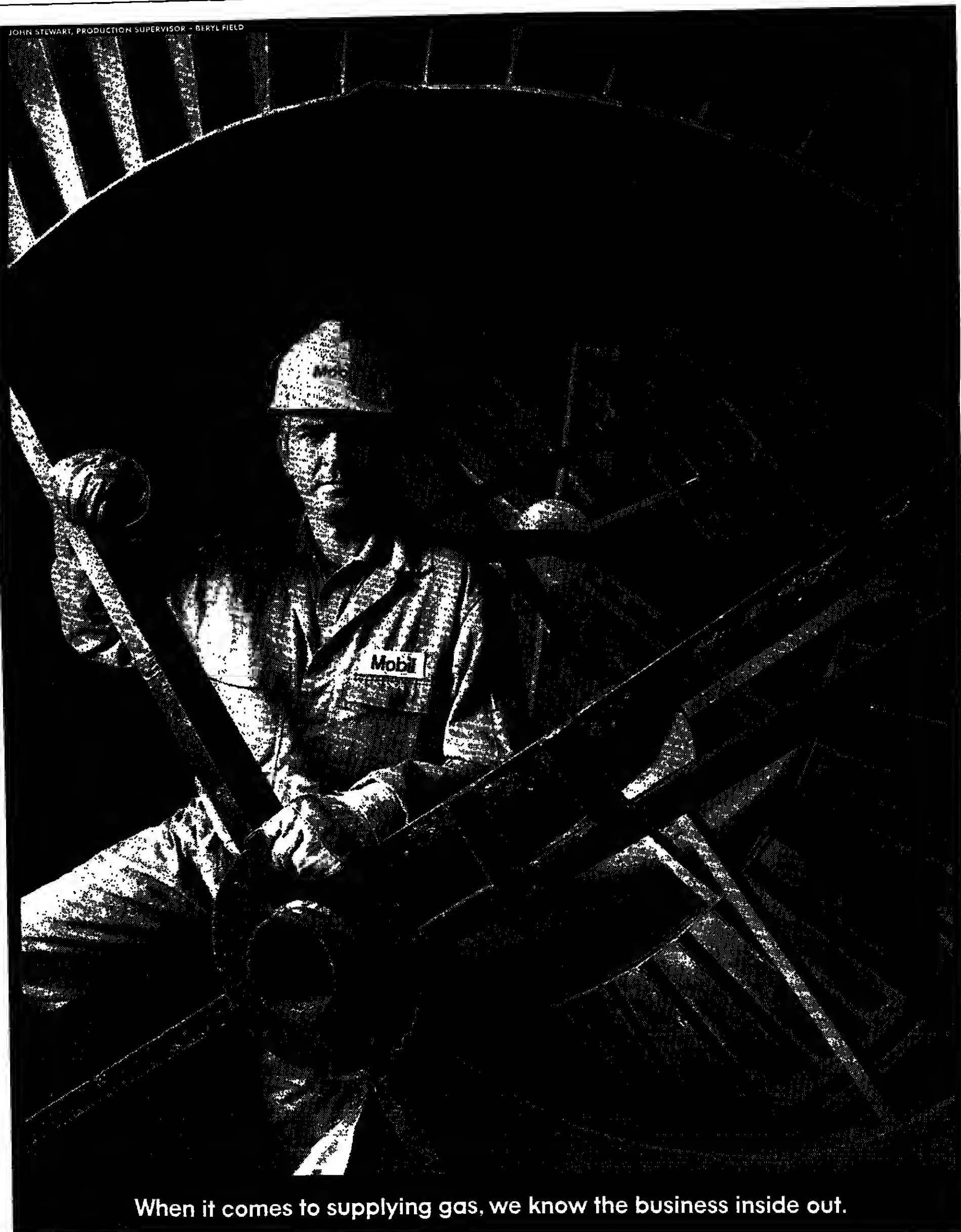
Harrods: Elvas plums £1.95 for 400g in a wooden box; fresh rainbow trout £1.50 a lb.

Lealand: diced steak £1.69 for 4lb; petits pois 99p for 2lb; whiting filets £1.99 for 680g.

Sainsbury's: boneless leg of pork £1.29 a lb; Irish mature Cheddar £1.79 a lb.

Somerfield: mangoes 79p each; Birds Eye chicken burgers 99p for four-pack.

Waitrose: fresh chicken salmon steak £3.99 a lb; dressed Cromer crab £2.49.



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Blair mocks Major over Tory 'state of anarchy'

By JONATHAN PRYNN AND ALICE THOMSON

TONY BLAIR seized on the Tory party's disunity over Europe yesterday to accuse the Prime Minister of leading an "ill-disciplined rabble, incapable of governing this country". Mr Blair's performance at Prime Minister's questions, his most effective since becoming Labour leader, brought tears of support as he asked Mr Major if he could understand why the public had no faith in the Government after such a disastrous week.

Listing recent embarrassments, including the resignation of Patrick Nicholson as a party vice-chairman, and Kenneth Clarke's claim that the Cabinet would resign over government defeat on Europe, Mr Blair said Tory backbenchers were "in a state of anarchy". The Prime Minister was also attacked by Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, who said most people believed that the Government and its "kamikaze Cabinet" had descended into "a state of anarchy".

Mr Blair countered by accusing Mr Blair of changing his views on Europe faster than a "rabbit heading for its burrow", and Mr Ashdown of having only "skin-deep" commitment to Europe. Mr Blair challenged Mr Major to open Monday's debate on the European Finance Bill since it was being treated as a confidence issue. Mr Major replied: "The vote of confidence relates not just to the vote on Monday but to the passage of the Bill in all its essentials. In those circumstances, the Cabinet consider it right that the Chancellor should open."

Gorman may table Euro-sceptic Bill

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MINISTERS face the threat of another Commons battle on Europe after one of the most hardline Tory Euro-sceptics won the chance to table legislation.

Teresa Gorman, at the forefront of the campaign against the Government's policies on Europe, was among the first MPs to be drawn in the annual ballot for Private Member's Bills. The first seven MPs drawn in the ballot will have prime parliamentary time to introduce legislation. Mrs Gorman, MP for Billericay, who came sixth in the ballot, came under pressure from fellow Euro-sceptics to use the opportunity to press forward with a Bill to loosen Britain's European Union links. Although such a Bill would have little chance of becoming law, it would unleash another powerful tide of Tory Euro-scepticism.

Diana Maddock, the Liberal Democrat victor at last year's Christchurch by-election, was the first to be debated, probably on January 20. She is considering introducing a measure on energy conservation.

Second in the ballot was David Jamieson (Lab, Plymouth Devonport), followed by Sir John Hanning (C, Exeter), Terry Lewis (Lab, Worsley), Harry Barnes (Lab, Derbyshire NE), Teresa Gorman, John McFall (Lab, Doncaster), Nicholas Budgen (C, Wolverhampton SW), Oliver Heald (C, Hertfordshire N), Malcolm Wicks (Lab, Croydon NW) and Dr Michael Clark (C, Rochford).

MPs then debated motions on business deregulation, two and three-wheeled vehicles and proposed increases in ministerial salaries. In the Lords, a four-day consideration of the Queen's Speech was concluded with a debate on industrial and economic affairs.

TODAY: The Commons will debate a motion on road safety. The House of Lords is not sitting.

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Gordon Brown, left, and Tony Blair announcing Labour's plans to create jobs

Labour aims for 300,000 new jobs

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TAX rebates for firms taking on workers who have been unemployed for at least two years would be introduced by a Labour government as part of a package to get the jobless back to work, Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor, announced yesterday.

Unveiling Labour's shadow Budget, Mr Brown proposed a £75-a-week tax rebate lasting six months for employers for each long-term jobless worker taken on.

The scheme, which would cost £100 million in its first year, aims to create 300,000 jobs. Rebates would be conditional on the jobs being full-time, and the worker receiving a national minimum wage — likely to be nearer the £3.50 proposed by Labour's Social Justice Commission than the £4.05 demanded by trade unions — and training being provided by the firm.

Mr Brown also announced plans to give a six-month National Insurance holiday for firms that hired people who had been unemployed for a year, provided they fulfilled the same conditions as the tax rebate scheme. Such a plan would cost an estimated £45 million a year, and be tied to the same conditions as the tax rebate. Both schemes would

be monitored to ensure that the rebates were paid only to employees who filled genuine vacancies and were not used to replace staff.

Mr Brown insisted that the start-up costs of both schemes would be more than covered by the proceeds of a multi-billion windfall tax on the profits of privatised utilities. Labour also plans to raise money by taxing executive share options, imposing a stamp duty on share transactions, and closing a number of tax loopholes.

The rebate scheme would cost about £665 million to set up, but an estimated £455 million would be saved on income support and housing benefit, with £115 million raised in tax and National Insurance from the new employees. In the second year, net savings of £105 million are estimated from the plan.

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, said that tackling long-term unemployment would be one of Labour's priorities. "Labour is the party of social unity and cohesion that will attack long-term unemployment and poverty as opposed to the Conservatives, who are the party of social indifference and inequality," Mr Blair said.

Lib Dems propose £100,000 tax band

THE Liberal Democrats are preparing to ditch proposals of higher tax for most high-income earners as they veer away from fighting the next general election as the party of high taxation (Arthur Leathley writes).

Unveiling a "disciplined and credible" Budget yesterday, the party proposed increasing income tax for those earning more than £100,000 a year to 50 per cent. Earlier this year senior figures had backed higher tax rates for those earning more than £33,000, believing it could distinguish the party from its opponents' tax-cutting pledges. They now believe this would affect too many natural supporters.

Malcolm Bruce, the party's Treasury spokesman, insisted that yesterday's tax plans are not those which will feature in the party's general election manifesto. "We have prepared our Budget on the basis of what the country can currently afford. That may well change over the next two years."

Their Budget proposals also include cutting VAT on domestic fuel bills to 5 per cent.

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Example Price	10% Deposit	Equal Monthly Payments 0% APR	Each	Total Payable
£2000	£200	24	£75	£2000

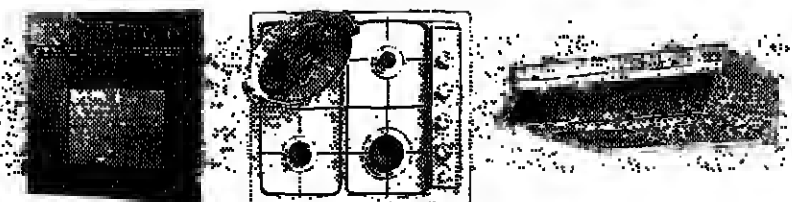
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Disenchanted voters put Conservatives a poor second on policy, leadership and unity

Labour's poll rating goes from strength to strength

By PETER RIDDELL

LABOUR has moved sharply ahead of the Tories as the party with the best team of leaders, the best policies and as being the most clear and united about its policies, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

The poll, undertaken last weekend, shows that over the past three years the advantage which the Tories enjoyed over Labour on these measures has been more than reversed. Even the much reduced band of Tory supporters, less than a quarter of the public, are less

favourably disposed towards their party's policies and leaders than are Labour's increased number of supporters.

For instance, just two-fifths of Tory supporters believe their party is the most clear and united about what its policies should be. By contrast, two thirds of Labour supporters regard their party as the most clear and united.

The poll underlines middle-class disillusion with the Tories. By a roughly four to three margin, they regard Labour rather than the Tories as

having the best team of leaders to deal with the country's problems. Labour also has the edge on having the best policies and being the most clear and united about what its policies should be. Three quarters of the public, including two thirds of the middle-classes, do not regard the Tories as ahead on any of the three measures.

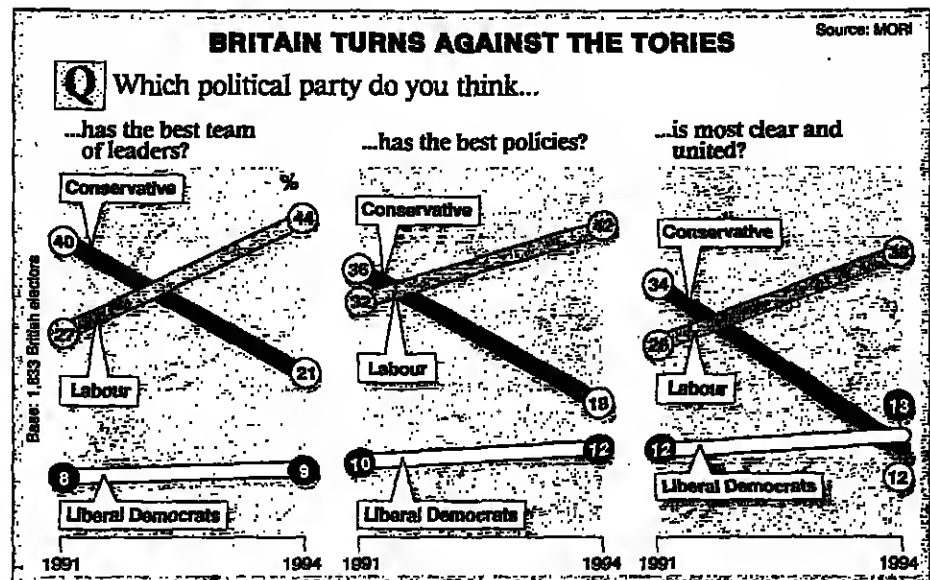
A mere third even of Tory supporters put their party ahead on all three measures, while more than half of Labour supporters rate their party

top on all three. By contrast, one in three of Liberal Democrat supporters put their party first on none of the measures and only a quarter rate their party top on all three.

Two thirds of the public believe that the Government should not carry on introducing radical policies like Mrs Thatcher did, while just a fifth believe it should do so. The strongest support for this approach comes from 19-24 year olds, who may be attracted by radical policies. Half of Tory supporters argue that the Government should carry on with such policies.

By a nearly five-to-one margin the public believes the Government should not have introduced legislation to split and privatise the Post Office in the recent Queen's Speech.

The poll shows that a quarter of those who say they generally identify with the Tories now support other parties. More back Labour than the Liberal Democrats, suggesting that Labour is no longer anathema to former Tories. Of those who say they voted Tory in 1992, a third now back other parties, two to one supporting Labour rather than the Liberal Democrats. By contrast, virtually all Labour identifiers say they would vote for the party. Four fifths of those who identify with the Liberal Democrats say they



support the party, with almost all the rest supporting Labour.

As in recent months, MORI has adjusted the figures to take account of the reluctance of Tory supporters to give their voting intentions. After adjusting for the declared votes of the "don't knows" in 1992, Tory support is shown at 27 per cent, against 24 per cent, with Labour on 52 per cent, against 55 per cent, and the Liberal Democrats on 18 per cent, against 17 per cent.

Recovery has yet to be felt

THE public remains uncertain about the state of the economy and increasing numbers of people are concerned about the health service, according to the MORI poll.

The economic optimism index, measuring those who believe that the general economic condition of the country will improve rather than get worse over the next 12 months, stands at minus six points, compared with minus

five points at the end of last month.

This is in the broad range of recent months in spite of growing evidence of strong growth in output. However, real take-home pay has fallen for many people because of tax increases and small pay awards.

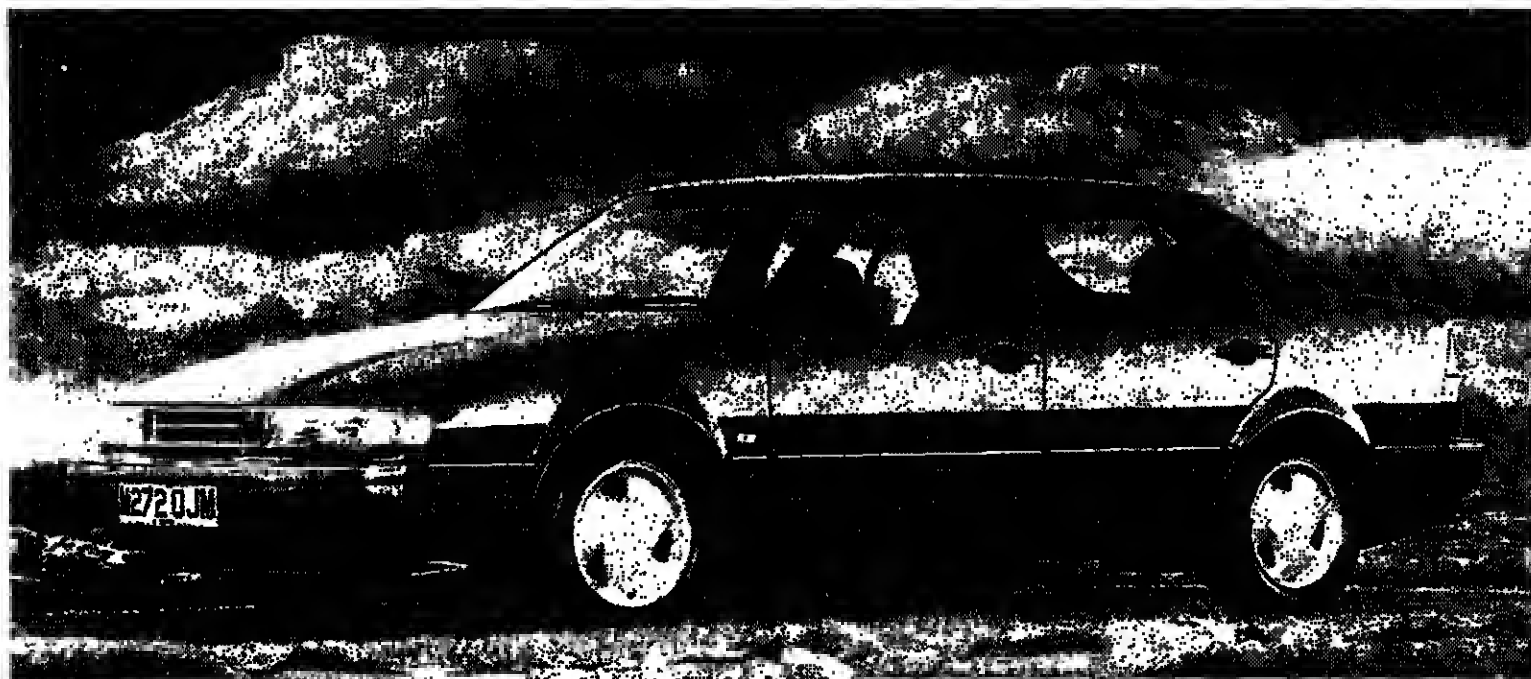
The poll shows that, while the index stands at plus two points for those in full-time work, it is at minus 21 points for those in part-time

work, many of whom are insecure about their job prospects.

Unemployment is regarded as the most important issue facing Britain today but there has been a sharp jump over the past month, from a third to two-fifths, in the proportion mentioning the health service. By contrast, the number of mentions of law and order has fallen from 27 to 25 per cent over the past month.

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MPs seek end to clawing back of victims' benefits

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A COMMONS investigation is to be launched into accusations that the Government is acting ruthlessly in reclaiming millions of pounds from victims of accidents and industrial disease.

After compensation is paid to victims of industrial disease, or motor and workplace accidents, they must pay back state benefits they received. However, the Income of the Compensation Recovery Unit — a government agency — has soared since the law was changed to allow it to claim back not only compensation for loss of earnings, but also payouts for pain, stress and suffering.

Ministers face a confrontation with MPs and lawyers over the work of the unit, which aims to claw back more than £150 million of compensation paid by insurance companies each year.

The unit has increased its income from £4 million in 1990 to £100 million this year following tighter rules on payments to accident and industrial disease victims. As more compensation claims come through the courts, the unit expects to increase its annual income to £150 million.

The Commons Social Security Select Committee will examine the work of the unit early next year after it was heavily criticised by MPs of all parties who are pressing for a change in the law.

MPs compare the unit's injustices to those of the Child Support Agency. One Tory MP said yesterday: "If the Child Support Agency was a headache for ministers in 1994, this will be the migraine of 1995. They have to change the rules."

MPs and lawyers claim that many compensation claimants are left without any payment for physical or psychological suffering. More than 180 MPs have supported a Commons motion demanding that the unit be abolished.

Lawyers will meet Roger Evans, a junior social security



Worthington: Claimants are getting poor deal

minister, next month to discuss the system.

The law change, which took place in 1989, has left many victims without compensation after having to pay up to £50,000 of insurance payments to the Government as the agency has recouped benefit payments.

John Hutton, Labour MP for Barrow and Furness and a leading campaigner for change, said: "No one argues with paying back loss-of-income benefits. But the current system means that you may end up with no money at all despite suffering years of pain. That cannot be tolerated."

As compensation below £2,500 is exempt from the claw-back rules, several insurers have avoided heavy payouts by offering payments that cannot be touched by the unit. Many lawyers also complain that victims who accept a reduced out-of-court settlement are still forced to pay back all benefit payments.

Tony Worthington, Labour MP for Clydebank, and Milngavie, who has campaigned on behalf of thousands of former Clydebank shipbuilders suffering from asbestosis, said: "It's leading to insurance companies playing a game of bluff with claimants — 'Do you want to fight this claim and lose it all to the Government, or take a smaller amount and keep it?' What sort of choice is that?"

Support grows for Whitehall ethics code

By MICHAEL DYNES, WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

AN ALL-PARTY committee of MPs put itself on a collision course with the Government yesterday after demanding a statutory code of ethics to preserve the political impartiality of the Civil Service.

The code would make clear that the duty of civil servants to uphold the law supersedes the loyalty they owe to the government of the day, the Treasury and Civil Service select committee said. Its report comes amid concern that the long period of Conservative rule has eroded Whitehall's tradition of neutrality. Such worries have been focused by the Scott arms-to-Iraq inquiry and the role of Sir Robin Butler, the Cabinet Secretary, after allegations of ministerial impropriety. The code would apply to public servants in Whitehall departments, executive agencies, quangos, and companies bidding for government contracts.

The Government tried Sir Robin insist that such a code is not necessary.

Trade unions, such as the First Division Association, which represents senior civil servants, have campaigned for a code, arguing that present rules and conventions provide little or no guidance for officials who have strong reservations about government policies or believe that ministers may have misled Parliament.

Traditional values of "impartiality, integrity, objectivity, selection and promotion on merit, and accountability," are as important today as when the modern Civil Service was founded in the mid-19th century, the committee said. The code of ethics should spell out the mutual rights and obligations of ministers and officials, making clear that civil servants must preserve their "political impartiality" and imposes a clear duty on ministers "not to ask civil servants to act in breach of the code."

Leading article, page 11

Nicholls hoped 'to help Major'

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE anti-Europe outburst that led to Patrick Nicholls's resignation as a vice-chairman of the Tory party was intended to support the Prime Minister, the MP said yesterday.

"I knew John Major was in for a kicking and thought it would be good to do a piece for local consumption supporting him," Mr Nicholls said. "I resigned because I could see the way the media were going to misuse what I was saying."

"I am sure I have caused the Prime Minister some embarrassment, which I greatly regret."

Mr Nicholls, the MP for Teignbridge, who is in hospital with impacted vertebrae caused by a car accident, angered Conservative Party leaders with an interview he gave to the *Western Morning News*. He called the French "collaborators" and said the Germans' only

contribution to Europe was starting two world wars.

Yesterday, in an interview with the *Torquay Herald Express*, he admitted that he went too far in his criticism, and promised that he would back Mr Major in Monday's crucial Commons vote on a Bill to increase Britain's contribution to the European Union budget even if he had to crawl from his hospital bed. He claimed that his initial remarks had been taken out of context. The whole point was to support the Mr Major, who had "secured the best possible deal in the most difficult circumstances."

Mr Nicholls's wife, Bridget, said yesterday "He is in traction and has got to rest. He must not be stressed." Conservative Central Office said that Mr Nicholls would not be adding to his resignation statement.

مكتبات الأمل

Muslims appeal to Nato as tanks advance on Bihac

Serb attack forces UN to redefine 'safe area'

BY JOEL BRAND IN SARAJEVO AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

HEAVY fighting was reported in and around the Bihac "safe area" yesterday as United Nations officials unveiled a plan to redraw the zone's borders and disarm Bosnian troops defending the town, in exchange for a ceasefire from advancing Serb forces.

The Serbs captured a key hill south of Bihac in a fierce attack that had pushed government defenders to the limits of their endurance, Haris Silajdzic, the Bosnian Prime Minister, said. "They are attacking from all sides and the houses are burning. They are attacking by artillery fire, by tank fire. They have taken the hill of Debeljaca, which is

armoured resupply convoy into the area for the first time in almost a month yesterday. It delivered a small amount of food to more than 1,000 hungry and desperate Bosnian troops and civilians.

Around Sarajevo, Serb forces continued to hold more than 250 French, Ukrainian and Canadian peacekeepers hostage against further Nato air raids. In the capital, Serb and Bosnian government troops traded mortar fire in defiance of Nato's ultimatum. A cafe was hit by what was believed to be a Serb rocket, killing a customer. The Holiday Inn was also struck by a shell.

Earlier in the day Lieutenant General Sir Michael Rose, the UN commander in Bosnia, said military activity around Bihac had "slowed slightly". At a morning meeting with Mr Silajdzic, General Rose appeared to have allayed the government's concern for the safety of the town. But by late afternoon, Mr Silajdzic said the situation was more critical than ever and that Serb troops, backed by tanks, were attempting to overrun the town.

There was no Serb response to the UN ceasefire proposal, which marks a step back from the organisation's tough warning to Serbs advancing on the area earlier in the week, and Monday's Nato air raid against a base from which the zone was being attacked.

Serb troops besieging the enclave, allowed a UN



A Canadian UN peacekeeper on observation duty yesterday at Visoko in central Bosnia, where 54 Canadian soldiers have been detained by Bosnian Serbs as hostages against further Nato airstrikes

immediately." Nato ministers were discussing these developments, but General Rose said the UN would not respond to incursions into the "safe area" unless civilians were directly attacked. Differentiating between civilian casualties who were targeted and those hit by stray fire during combat in the relatively small UN-protected area would be difficult.

While reaffirming the UN's insistence that the boundaries of the "safe area" be respected, General Rose said also that they would be subject to renegotiation, presumably with regard to the reality Serb soldiers were establishing on the ground.

"We have delineated a 'safe area'," General Rose said at an outdoor press conference punctuated by at least one explosion and several bursts

of fire on nearby confrontation lines. "We shall expect the line that we have drawn on the map is respected."

However, he went on to say that for tactical reasons the border might be moved. "There is nothing sacrosanct about that line. It is a line we have drawn on the map and in the light it may prove to be drawn in a slightly different place."

General Rose added that the plan would call for a demilitarisation of all forces within the "safe area" borders.

"They are going to redefine the 'safe area' to suit the Bosnian Serbs," said one UN official disappointed with the climbdown. "It's a good plan - I'm sure [Bosnian Serb Army commander General Ratko] Mladic is very pleased."



Bosnia to dominate round of summits

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

AGAINST a background of worsening confrontation in Bosnia, Europe, Russia and America this weekend began the most intensive round of diplomacy yet attempted in the search for a way out of the Yugoslav morass.

Over the next two weeks presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers and senior diplomats from three continents will meet in Brussels, Paris and Budapest to coordinate the efforts of the Contact Group, Nato, the North Atlantic Co-operation Council and the 33-nation Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe to force an end to the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina and prevent the worsening of new East-West tensions.

Not only is there a real prospect of an all-out war in Bosnia with the American threat to lift the arms embargo in five months; but the Euro-

peans with troops in Bosnia have also made clear that they will not keep their forces there beyond this winter if the ban is lifted. At the same time, the end of the German presidency and the transition to the French leadership of the European Union will see a new push for deeper European integration and preparations to admit new members from Eastern Europe. With the Bosnian conflict, that will dominate the European summit in Essen which begins next Friday week.

Almost two weeks of non-stop negotiations begin on Sunday when special representatives to the five-nation Contact Group meet in Paris to prepare for a full meeting of the foreign ministers of Britain, France, Germany, America and Russia in Brussels next Friday. At the meeting of the officials in London last week the group failed to agree

proposals to broaden the peace package on offer to the warring parties in Bosnia, the so-called Plan B.

Since then the rift has deepened between Russia and the Europeans on the one hand and America on the other, increasingly seen by its Western allies as unreliable and naïve on Bosnia. The Contact Group's priority is to maintain its own

possible to enforce using air power alone.

The tensions over Bosnia will be carried over the next day, Monday, into the meeting of European Union foreign ministers in Brussels. They will come up again at the regular Nato summit in Brussels on Thursday, and the next day at the North Atlantic Co-operation Council, the body that groups Nato and the former Warsaw Pact members. The tension between the Europeans and the Americans within Nato over the use of air power in Bosnia will be exacerbated by a new push by the Clinton Administration, under pressure from the Republican-dominated Congress, to extend Nato membership rapidly to Eastern Europe.

Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State, will present the Clinton Administration's arguments in a speech on

European-American relations on Monday. But these are unlikely to still the growing doubts of most Europeans, especially in view of Washington's own earlier preference for less formal links based on the Partnership for Peace agreements. Further, despite Washington's insistence that its moves are not directed against Moscow, Russia will certainly express opposition to the inclusion of any former Warsaw Pact members.

America and Russia may find more agreement at the two-day CSCE summit that begins on Monday week in Budapest. Russia has long proposed that this body, the offspring of the Helsinki agreements, should be the security umbrella for Europe, to which Nato should be subordinate. It is proposing a CSCE security council, along United Nations lines, and wants the CSCE - with a changed name - to endorse Russian peacekeeping efforts in the turbulent republics of the former Soviet Union.

America and Western Europe have long opposed any dilution of Nato, however, and have been dismissive of a body that has a small budget and seems little more than a loosely organised talking shop on human rights and minority issues.

Last week, however, Washington started its allies by proposing an expanded role for the CSCE, despite its failure to act in former Yugoslavia, to give teeth to the job of its new commissioner for minorities, or to develop a mechanism to implement its decisions that demand consensus when there is neither political, military nor geographical cohesion. Britain and the West Europeans remain lukewarm.

DIPLOMACY

unity so that the Bosnian war does not lead to divisive new alliances. But the Nato airstrikes have led to angry accusations from Russia that it has not been properly consulted; and America's call for a new weapons exclusion zone around Bihac has angered Britain and France which see the imposition of such a zone as impractical without huge troop reinforcements and im-

Untidy war tests Nato credibility

BY JOEL BRAND

WHEN Nato discusses it, when and how to respond to the Serbs' attack on the Bihac "safe area" much more will be at stake than the town, the residents or the United Nations mission.

Credibility is paramount for an alliance which won, or at least survived, the Cold War on the plausibility of its threat. But in Bihac, Nato, is losing vital ground quickly.

The nature of the terrain, its "safe area" status and the other UN operations in Bosnia severely hamper Nato's options around the town. But while reluctant to act to an almost impossible situation, the alliance's credibility is on the line.

Searching for a post-Cold War purpose for its continued existence, the 45-year-old alliance signed up for duty in Bosnia and put its war planes at the disposal of the UN peacekeeping force. Within days

of the two organisations' first joint action - the February ultimatum to Serbs around Sarajevo - tensions began appearing between UN commanders, steeped in a policy of concession to the stronger party, and Nato commanders, bent on making their ultimatums stick. In an interview in *Le Monde* in October,

ANALYSIS

Major-General Bertrand Delapresle, the commander of the UN force in the former Yugoslavia, listed the three biggest threats to his mission as the two sides to the conflict and Nato.

Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, the UN commander in Bosnia, and other senior peacekeeping officials, have frequently dissuaded Nato officers from

taking a more forceful approach to enforcing ultimatums and agreements.

On Monday Nato launched its most ambitious assault in the history of the alliance on a Serb-held air base at Udubina, Croatia, using about 40 planes.

The raid was calculated to cause only temporary damage to a runway and leave the war planes that had attacked Bihac, parked nearby, unscathed. Admiral Leighton Smith, head of Nato's southern Europe command which carried out the raids on Monday and on Wednesday, hinted at frustration with the mission's limited scope when he said: "You need to understand that [the UN command] are the ones that set the objective of the mission... their objective was to change behaviour, not to destroy the military capability in and around Udubina."

Moscow unease growing

BY EVE-ANN PRENTICE, DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

RUSSIA and China separately signalled their growing unease yesterday at Nato airstrikes against Bosnian Serbs.

Andrei Kozyrev, the Russian Foreign Minister, accused Bosnian Muslims of provoking Bosnian and Croatian Serbs and trying to draw the alliance into fighting on their side.

The Muslim side launched its latest offensive with the clear intention of involving Nato and other third forces in fighting on its side, achieving the lifting of the arms embargo and ensuring air strikes," he said in Moscow. "Krajina [Croatian] and Bosnian Serbs... always respond without restraint," and any outside military involvement would result in "a second Afghanistan or Vietnam".

Mr Kozyrev said Moscow believed that a meeting of the five-nation Contact Group next month should send a "signal that the world community favours a return to political methods".

China said it was deeply concerned at this week's airstrikes. "We are disturbed by the situation," Shen Guofang, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, said. "The use of air force should be limited to self-defence and the safety of civilians in safe havens, instead of being abused for punishment," he said.

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Berlusconi inquiry judges examine secret bank fund

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

FRESH evidence that Silvio Berlusconi, the Italian Prime Minister, was involved in corruption emerged yesterday as magistrates examined a bank account allegedly used by him to bribe tax inspectors, judicial sources said.

Discovery of the account led magistrates in Milan to place Signor Berlusconi under formal investigation on suspicion of corruption on Monday, throwing Italy into a dangerous political crisis. Jan Gawronski, the Prime Minister's spokesman, retorted that "Berlusconi does not need black funds". But the Ansa news agency quoted judicial sources in Milan as confirming it was the discovery of the bank account that led investigators to issue him with a formal judicial warning.

Francesco Saverio Borelli, the head of the Milan anti-corruption pool of magistrates, said yesterday that they had sufficient evidence to warrant placing the Prime Minister under investigation.

Signor Berlusconi was holding talks last night with trade union leaders over pension reforms in an attempt to head off a general strike they have called for next week.

Signor Berlusconi's brother, Paolo, had hinted during in-

terrogation by magistrates about the existence of a "safe" used to make payments that it was preferable did not appear on company balance sheets. The account apparently was stocked in part with funds from the sale of buildings belonging to the Berlusconi construction concern. Edilnord, in which both the brothers worked and made their initial fortunes, said the sources. The account was also used for payments to Signor Berlusconi's family and "collaborators", they said.

Signor Gawronski said: "Silvio Berlusconi for many years has been the first or second largest Italian taxpayer. He therefore has no need to resort to black funds nor to Swiss bank accounts for his gifts to collaborators, relatives and friends."

The government sought to play down the gravity of the Prime Minister's position. President Scalfaro, who is anxious that the Prime Minister hang on until the 1995 budget is passed to stop the country going bankrupt, has given Signor Berlusconi his tacit support. Milan magistrates are expected to travel to Rome later this week to have a "conversation" with the Prime Minister in his office at the

Palazzo Chigi. Meanwhile, the coalition partners wrangled over a proposal by Signor Berlusconi to hold a summit meeting of his right-wing government forces to decide whether they still agreed on the aims they had in common when they took office in May.

Alfredo Biondi, the Justice Minister, said the showdown would happen next Tuesday during a Cabinet meeting. Roberto Maroni, the Interior Minister, replied it was too early for such a summit.

The squabbling over the proposed summit has provided Signor Berlusconi with a welcome distraction from the corruption saga. He is the first Italian Prime Minister in postwar history to be placed under formal investigation while in office.

The opposition has behaved with remarkable restraint throughout the crisis, clearly loath to let the Prime Minister convince ordinary Italians that he is a martyr. However, Massimo D'Alema, the leader of the Democratic Party of the Left, said yesterday that if the Prime Minister wanted to test the strength of his coalition he should resign, implying that his allies would not ask him to return since he has become a political liability.



Boris Holland-Moritz, left, and Dirk Brusberg at their trial in Schleswig yesterday

Synagogue arson suspects on trial

FOUR men went on trial yesterday in Schleswig accused of firebombing a synagogue in Lübeck, northern Germany, the first such attack since the Nazi era. Nico Trapel, 20, and Boris Sven Holland-Moritz, 20, admitted they were at the scene

of the attack in March but Dirk Brusberg, 22, and Stefan Markus Westphal, 25, denied they were there. They were charged with arson and five counts of attempted murder. The synagogue, containing five people who were not hurt, was badly damaged. (Reuters)

KGB old hands drafted back to the Lubyanka

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

ONE of the most feared branches of the former KGB, the "investigative department", is to be re-established at the Lubyanka as part of President Yeltsin's decision to beef up his security services.

In a move that has caused unease among former dissidents, the Russian leader has decreed that 1,000 employees are to be recruited to the department, which will have operatives across the country. Of particular concern is the decision to rehire some former KGB agents, laid off when the Soviet intelligence service was

shut down and broken up. The KGB was disbanded in theory after the August 1991 coup against Mikhail Gorbachev. Its new duties were divided, along the Western intelligence model, between two new agencies, the Federal Counter-Intelligence Service (FSK) and the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR).

However, in a move to prevent the post-communist spies from ever turning their headquarters at the Lubyanka back into Russia's most feared address, the dreaded investigation department became the responsibility of the more accountable Public Prosecutors' Office.

Aleksandr Zdanovich, a spokesman for the FSK, said that the agency's new powers would simply turn a secret service into a "law and order

body", which would investigate espionage, treason, terrorism and smuggling. According to Russian press reports, the department has already been given its first case: investigating seven alleged foreign spies, arrested while in the service of an unnamed foreign power.

Sergei Stupashin, the FSK director, has repeatedly spoken of the threat posed to Moscow by its old Cold War rivals in the West and the newly-formed, but KGB-trained, intelligence agencies in the former Soviet republics.

However, most Russians are less worried about the threat posed by external spies and more by the very real danger that the new agency, which employs 76,000 people, may be tempted to resort to some of the methods used by its notorious predecessor. Under communist rule, millions of Russians were arrested, jailed and killed by KGB investigators who convicted them falsely of espionage and treason.

Alexei Smirnov, director of the International Research Centre on Human Rights, who spent five years in a Soviet prison for "anti-Soviet propaganda", said: "There are still people in the investigative department and in the FSK who persecuted dissidents and used illegal methods, including torture."

Honecker sale stars Mickey Mouse

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

ERICH Honecker, the late unloved leader of East Germany, will be subjected to the final indignity today: his clothes, fur-lined Wellingtons, gold watches, chipped statues and Mickey Mouse videos are being put up for auction.

Private collectors from Japan and America, and Swiss and German museum directors, are among bidders for nearly 1,000 items, expected to raise around £100,000. Honecker died last May in Chilean exile after being released from trial in Germany because of ill health.

The items provide a revealing snapshot of the dictator's private life. It was above all a modest suburban kind of existence. The most expensive single item is a hideously ugly silver beer stein engraved with a picture of Honecker's birthplace in the Saar (reserve price £3,000).

His favourite hobby was hunting. His fellow hunters, including Erich Mielke, the Security Minister, and other Politburo members, would

discuss whom to hire and fire, how to deal with Moscow and other sensitive issues while tramping from one shooting box to another. The auction will include the leader's suede hunting jacket, hat, furry Wellingtons and green trousers.

When the Berlin Wall fell, East Germans were furious about the privileges enjoyed by the communist elite. But the lots in today's Hamburg auction do not give the impression of a wild-living spendthrift. The gold watches for sale were chiefly presents from other Eastern bloc leaders.

The most intimate items are probably the three Mickey Mouse videos (reserve price £40). Just as Stalin relaxed with Westerners, Honecker would put his feet up, forget his problems and watch Mickey, Pluto and Goofy.

The memorabilia, confiscated and sold when communist rule collapsed in 1989-90, are being resold now that relics of the East German era are becoming rare.

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Dole wins Helms pledge to temper attacks on Clinton

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

ROBERT Dole, who will be the Senate's Republican leader from January, is to proceed with Jesse Helms's appointment as chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee having won assurances from the arch-conservative that he will make no more outrageous remarks about President Clinton.

Hints of the reconciliation came late on Wednesday when it was revealed that President Clinton and Mr Dole had reached agreement on the ratification of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) accord by the Senate which the Republicans had been threatening to wreck. The vote is now expected to go ahead next week.

Mr Dole said he had spoken by telephone to Mr Helms after the North Carolina senator told a local newspaper this week that Mr Clinton was so hated on his state's military bases he "better have a body-guard" if he visited them. Last weekend Mr Helms told a television interviewer that Mr Clinton was not fit to be Commander-in-Chief of the US military.

"I think we agreed it wouldn't happen again," said Mr Dole. Mr Helms had expressed regret for his comments, which prompted a Secret Service investigation, but explained they were not meant seriously. "I reminded him that now that you're the chairman, or will be the

chairman, even things you say, sometimes jokingly or in jest, are taken seriously," said Mr Dole.

Mr Helms's comments about Mr Clinton, and some of his more extreme prescriptions for US foreign policy, have embarrassed his fellow Republicans and provoked loud demands from Democrats and the media that Mr Dole should deny him the committee chairmanship.

"I couldn't do that if I wanted to. I don't want to," Mr Dole said. "My view is that it is over. It probably shouldn't have been said, even in jest, and I hope it's not said again. He knows if you make a mistake you don't try to repeat it."

In sharp contrast to Mr Helms's confrontational ap-



Dole: hints of reconciliation

proach to the White House, Mr Dole struck a deal with President Clinton on Wednesday that virtually guarantees Senate approval of a new world trade accord next week.

The compromise raised hopes that a Republican Congress and the White House may be able to find some common ground on foreign policy over the next two years despite Mr Helms's prominent new role.

Both Mr Dole and Newt Gingrich, the next House Speaker, have now endorsed the GATT accord despite fierce opposition from the isolationist and protectionist right. This was particularly difficult for Mr Dole, who needs conservative support if he is to win his party's 1996 presidential nomination.

Speaking in Australia, former President Bush deplored the rise of isolationists such as Mr Helms and Ross Perot with their "faux siren's call". Saying they would put pressure on Mr Clinton, he urged: "We cannot listen to the Ross Perots of the world and pull back into isolation, saying 'Let someone else do it.'"

Port-au-Prince: America will reduce its troop strength in Haiti to 6,000 by mid-December, William Perry, the Defence Secretary, said yesterday. He made the remarks to about 200 US soldiers in the Port-au-Prince presidential palace at an event attended by President Aristide.



The Clintons helping to serve meals at a shelter for the homeless in Washington that provides nearly 1,000 meals a day to the capital's destitute. The First Couple then went to Camp David

Thanksgiving serves up surprise

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN WASHINGTON

THANKSGIVING was celebrated in America yesterday with fanfare and parades across the country.

Giant balloons depicting some of America's favorite cartoon characters soared over Broadway in Macy's annual parade, an American institution for 68 years. The march drew tens of thousands of spectators and was televised to an estimated national audience of more than 48 million.

The Clintons were spending the holi-

day at Camp David, the presidential retreat in the Catoctin Mountains of Maryland. Hillary Clinton said the family would have a traditional turkey dinner.

Earlier President Clinton granted a traditional White House Thanksgiving pardon to a 50 lb turkey, then joined his wife Hillary in serving a turkey meal at a local soup kitchen. The first couple helped to dish out midday dinners to nearly 150 homeless people at the So

Others Might Eat kitchen in northeast Washington. "I think that this is an important time for all of us to think about the larger American community of which we are a part," Mr Clinton said. The soup kitchen, about a mile from the Capitol, serves nearly 1,000 meals a day. Patrons were told the day before that a special guest would be there on Thanksgiving, which commemorates the Pilgrim Fathers' celebration of the good harvest of 1621.

Hamas bus bomber sentenced to death

Jenin, West Bank: An Israeli military court sentenced a member of the Hamas militant Muslim group to death yesterday for planning a bus bombing in April in which five people were killed, army radio said.

Israel radio said that unless the death penalty were overturned by a higher court or a high-ranking army officer, Said Badarnah, 24, would be the second person to be executed in Israel after Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi, who was hanged in 1962. (Reuters)

Timor clash

Jakarta: Indonesian security forces barricaded hundreds of students and staff inside the university in Dili, the East Timor capital, yesterday after protesters threw stones at police. Later, 29 East Timorese protesters ended their 12-day sit-in at the American Embassy and left for exile in Portugal. (Reuters)

Deaths inquiry

Nagpur: A judicial inquiry has been ordered into a stampede in which about 130 people were killed after police baton-charged tribal protesters in Nagpur, central India. (Reuters)

Arms charge

Sydney: Edward Hughes, 60, a Briton, has been charged in Queensland, Australia, with trying to buy weapons for an attempt to overthrow the government of Cameroon. (Reuters)

Fatal blaze

Gütersloh: Three people were killed and three badly burnt in a fire at a guesthouse in Verl, western Germany. Two Britons were slightly injured when they fell while using bedsheets to escape.

Artist injured

Amsterdam: Rob Schulte, a leading Dutch artist, was critically injured, losing his legs, after a bomb blew up in his car. His wife, who was in the front passenger seat, was slightly injured.

Sex abuse trial

Maine: Seven people, including an American, have gone on trial accused of sexually abusing seven young children and hiring them out as prostitutes. (Reuters)

Food protest

Moscow: Dozens of hungry pensioners, homeless people and refugees demonstrated outside parliament over the closure by city authorities of the Russian capital's only full-time soup kitchen. (AP)

Manhattan turns off sex industry

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

NEW YORK officials have banned the opening of any more sex-orientated video shops, theatres or bars for a year while they try to find a permanent way to stem the rising tide of sex businesses.

Over the past decade the city's adult entertainment industry has grown by more than a third and spread into residential districts. The city now has more than 200 such establishments, opponents of

the trade say. The one-year moratorium on the industry's expansion, initiated by Rudolph Giuliani, the Mayor, and approved by the city council, has been challenged by civil liberties groups who say it violates the First Amendment guaranteeing freedom of expression.

"If we want the government to act as the arbiter of good taste, we might as well abolish the First Amendment," said

Norman Siegel, executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union. The group plans to file a lawsuit against the city on behalf of the sex industry.

The ban is a response to the rising frustration of residents powerless to prevent gaudy topless bars, pornography shops and sex video outlets which have opened in residential areas. The Mayor intends to establish new planning

rules that would restrict X-rated shops to industrial areas and break up sex districts such as Manhattan's notorious 42nd Street by prohibiting such establishments from operating within 500ft of each other, residential neighbourhoods, churches or schools.

Some politicians, however, argue that the plan will push the sex industry out of Manhattan into neighbouring areas.

New York police get crash course in safe driving

BY BEN MACINTYRE

NEW York policemen, some of the worst drivers in a city renowned for maniacal motoring, must now undergo a course in how to avoid crashing their squad cars.

From January 1 all police officers will be required to wear seatbelts as part of a plan to improve their driving skills and increase their life expectancy, said William Bratton, the New York Police Commissioner.

Officers of the NYPD (Not Yet Proficient Drivers) are far more likely to die in car accidents than in shoot-outs. Last year, the police had a total of 3,343 car crashes, injuring 1,230 policemen and costing nearly \$3 million (£1.9 million) in sick pay. By contrast, 20 officers were wounded in shootings. "I see the use of seatbelts as every bit as

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A poster reinforces the "slow down and live longer" campaign aimed at New York police force drivers

important as the use of bullet-proof vests," Mr Bratton said. "They are going to wear seatbelts or they are going to walk."

The new regulations call for improved video training, penalties for officers who cause accidents, and incentives for those who do not. Under existing law, the police are already supposed to buckle up, but since they administer the law, few bother. "There are guys who have made a career out of writing seatbelt tickets who never wear their own," a police official observed.

Poles open Metro 70 years late

FROM PAT KOZA IN WARSAW

THE idea to relieve Warsaw's dire traffic congestion was first suggested at the end of the First World War. But even though the streets are no longer jammed with horse-drawn carriages, the Polish capital's first underground railway, which was unveiled yesterday, is as necessary now as it was nearly 70 years ago.

The first 11km (6.8 miles) of track, with 11 stations and representing about half of the north-south line, will open officially in January. It is expected to carry about 13,000 people daily.

"You need ten or 12 years without wars or economic crises to build a subway," said General Bohdan Zim, construction director of the Metro. "The last time such a situation occurred in Poland was in the 16th century."

The Depression set back the first proposal for a Warsaw underground service. The authorities started again in 1938, but then the Second World War broke out.

The project was resurrected in 1949, but this time Stalin had his own ideas. General Zim said: "The Polish designers were 'invited' to Moscow and told that the subway was too shallow, and there should be nuclear shelters in the stations."

Large stations were added, but as the Korean War began, money from the communist world was diverted for armaments.

By the 1970s, Poland was bankrupt. The year after martial law was declared in 1981, the project — modelled on the Moscow system — finally started.

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Guard claims Kim had foes' pregnant wives executed

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

A NORTH Korean defector to the South said yesterday that pregnant wives of political prisoners were executed in public to end the bloodlines of dissidents.

An Myong Chol, 25, told a news conference in Seoul that the execution of pregnant women was part of a campaign by the Stalinist rulers in Pyongyang.

"About once or twice a year, North Korea would publicly execute those caught trying to escape, those who led dissident rallies, and pregnant women," said Mr An, who said he worked as a guard at a North Korean concentration camp.

He said the execution of dissidents' wives was intended to quell opposition to the autocratic rule of the Kim dynasty, Kim Il Sung, and Kim Jong Il, his son, who took power on the death of "the Great Leader" on July 8.

Mr An said he decided to flee to the South last month when his father committed suicide after being caught stealing food and his mother was jailed on false charges of trying to poison her husband. Mr An, from Hongwon county in Hamgyong province, left behind his mother and two younger brothers.

He said prisoners at the detention camp where he worked were so starved that they had to eat rats, snakes and frogs. "The inmates were reduced to skin and bone out of malnutrition," he said.

Both North and South Korea exploit defections to make political capital. Mr An has brought the number of people fleeing from the North this year to 45.

He told the news conference, organised by the Agency for National Security Planning, that details of such detention camps were sketchy but he had heard of at least five. "Prisoners are clad in used military uniforms and supplied with worn-out tyres

and animal skins to make shoes," he said.

Mr An also claimed that political prisoners had been kept in the dark about Kim Il Sung's death, "because the authorities fear riots".

After Kim's death, he added, he had been told by a senior officer of a failed attempt by workers in Pyongyang to blow up a statue of the former President. But the workers were caught by security officials at the last guard post before the statue, he quoted the officer as saying.

Mr An said that the camp where he worked, in the northern city of Hoiryong, accommodated 50,000 political prisoners and their fam-

ilies. South Korean officials claim that North Korea has 100,000 political prisoners in scores of camps across the country, which are tightly operated by the North's state security agency.

Amid these claims, new evidence emerged that Kim Jong Il is consolidating his hold on power. The official Korean Central News Agency reported that a new song, entitled "We Pledge", represented the determination of 22 million North Koreans to uphold the leadership of the younger Kim, known as "the Dear Leader".

"I firmly believe that you will vigorously struggle for the accomplishment of the socialist cause, the revolutionary cause of *juche* (self-reliance), upholding the leadership of Comrade Kim Jong Il with loyalty," the song says.

"The Korean people pledge themselves to uphold Comrade Kim Jong Il forever," it adds.

The announcement of the song followed publication earlier this month of Mr Kim's lengthy treatise, *Socialism is Science*.

"The song conveys the revolutionary will of the Korean people to become rifles and bombs and fortresses and a shield defending Comrade Kim Jong Il with their lives," the agency said.

Analysts in Tokyo said Mr Kim, 52, appeared to be in firm control of the communist state. "The North Koreans would have to listen to the song on state-run television and radio every day," one Korea watcher said. "That's part of the strategy worked out by the North Korean leadership to command loyalty."

Mr Kim has not yet been formally appointed to the key posts of President and party General Secretary, titles held by his father. However, the strictly controlled Pyongyang press has been treating him as the nation's leader.



Tokyo: Japan's government yesterday considered sending letters of apology bearing the name of Tomiichi Murayama, the Prime Minister, above, to Second World War "comfort women" as a way out of growing calls for it to pay them compensation. The women would also receive money from a private fund.

In Tokyo, three Korean former "comfort women" began a day's hunger strike, demanding an apology and reparations. (Reuters)



Yoshi Kodama takes in the atmosphere of his new job at the Foreign Office yesterday. After a welcome from Douglas Hurd, Mr Kodama, a former student at Trinity College, Cambridge, must now spend two weeks looking at his own country from the viewpoint of a European

Japanese sees Whitehall from the inside

■ Michael Binyon meets the diplomat who, until last week, was a second secretary at the Japanese Embassy in London and has now joined the Foreign Office under an exchange scheme that was initiated by John Major

YOSHI Kodama little thought as he was finishing his thesis on international relations at Trinity College, Cambridge, that he would set a precedent in the field only a year later. But his arrival in the Far East department of the Foreign Office marks the first time Britain has borrowed a diplomat from Japan — and the first time a Japanese diplomat has had to look at his own country through European eyes.

Until last week Mr Kodama, 28, worked as a second secretary at the Japanese Embassy in London, a normal start to the training of a British specialist. His experience has been given an extraordinary boost by a proposal John Major put to his Japanese hosts in Tokyo in 1993. Japan, the Prime Minister suggested, should join France and Germany in a regular exchange of diplomats with London. Within a year, John Marshall became the first foreigner ever to be

seconded to the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

Now it is Mr Kodama's turn. Welcomed by Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, and given a tour of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office departments — especially those dealing with Europe, his speciality — he works on the Japan desk, where his knowledge of how to cut through bureaucracy and track down the relevant official in Tokyo is being put to use.

It is a stint of only two weeks. Next year, the exchange could be expanded. How do the two systems compare?

Despite the formality of the Japanese system, he finds office working relationships similar. "People here, at least superficially, are very friendly," he said. "But people are more individual in the way they work. In Tokyo, we have more of a team mentality. The pace here is much faster."

Though for a year he worked less than a mile from the Foreign Office, he has found his secondment an eye-opener. He is struck especially by the ruthless efficiency; the constant effort to rationalise and streamline the structure and set priorities. It is an aspect of work he will underline when

he reports to his ambassador and the "high officials" who picked him for the secondment. He will probably also recommend that Japanese diplomats take more holidays.

Surprisingly, coming from a Japanese, he finds the Foreign Office uses technology more efficiently, and each department is more willing to share information. In Japan, officials regard knowledge as power, and fight to increase their empires, using jealously hoarded knowledge as the main weapon.

What should Britain adopt of Japanese practice? "I think you are too Euro-centric. You have lost the old global way of thinking and are too departmentalised. This is perhaps inevitable. But you do not take much account of Asia." Or Japan, he might have added, Mr Kodama will return to Tokyo next year. In about seven years, he will probably return.

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We've had no choice but to live a lie

Are two divorces a just impediment to a vicar's third marriage? Susanne Hall, who loves him, thinks not

In the Church of England's view, to have one wife walk out on you may be regarded as a misfortune, but to lose two looks like carelessness. Hence the little local difficulty in the Norfolk backwoods this week, where the Rev Kit Chalcraft, aged 50, popular vicar of Gooderstone, is forbidden to marry Susanne Hall, widow of a nearby parish, aged 58.

Mrs Hall, whose love for the vicar threatens to cost him his job, faces the camera with assurance. She was once a television reporter with *Nationwide* — and as her old colleague Sue Lawley pointed out, she would have loved to cover a story like this one.

She has an irrepressible personality and enjoys all the jokes about a situation straight out of Joanna Trollope. "After *The Rector's Wife*, the vicar's mistress," she says. A headline "Three Weddings And It's Your Funeral" made her hot. And when Kit Hesketh-Devereaux, of the cabaret duo "Kit And The Widow" had a letter on the *PM* programme on Wednesday, she laughed uproariously.

She would be an adornment in any vicarage — and owns a house the C of E would be proud to call a rectory. It is hidden behind a terrace of cottages in old Georgian Swaffham, with a crunchy gravel drive and a vast garden of landscaped orderliness. Every pebbled path and pruned rose arch was created by Mrs Hall from a wasteland on which a previous owner raised goats. Inside, family portraits — ancestors, grandchildren, cricket team, Burleigh horse trials — reflect the family life she enjoyed, and her handiwork — curtains, tapestry, cushions — is everywhere. "I sew, I paint, I garden, I dry flowers, I'm a total home bird." So although she remembers amusing stories she did for *Nationwide* (for example the biggest conger eel in captivity being stuffed in Islington), when they offered her bigger fish, *Pebble Mill* or *Gardeners' World*, she put family first.

This week the Bishop of Norfolk, goaded by a letter from a born-again Christian in the village, declared he

THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW



could not permit the remarriage of the vicar of Gooderstone. "But this is 1994, as my son Mark said. He said, 'No wonder the Church is so out of touch with the reality of people's lives. They live in a timewarp'."

The bishop says the vicar has already been treated with unusual generosity in being allowed to carry on, as a divorcee.

"The bishop, poor man, who doesn't even know Kit, cannot retract," says Mrs Hall. "But he underestimates the extent to which country people will go to defend a man they love when they see injustice done." The locals, from worriers to squires, love their parish priest, and the churchwardens are mutinous.

Mr Chalcraft has offered to become a non-stipendiary priest. He could live, instead of in the "frightful" modern vicarage at Gooderstone, in Mrs Hall's house at the epicentre of seven of his 10 parishes. His own parents, both 88, live in Swaffham too. "Is not the Church short of funds? Here we are offering a marvellous priest for nothing, who won't even require a house. We'd be pressed for cash," says Mrs Hall, "but we could manage."

She even has the parish magazine office in her home. Between them, they have seven grown-up children — doing well in various professions and lauded with Firsts — and five grandchildren.

Mrs Hall, only child of an army colonel, was a ward of court at eight during her own parents' acrimonious divorce. So when she married, straight out of Sherborne school, at 18,



Susanne Hall: "Here we are offering a marvellous priest for nothing, who won't even require a house."

all she wanted was a stable family life. Her husband Tom was a former county cricketer who owned a boatyard. His sudden death in an accident ten years ago left the family distraught. "Kit was then our vicar and he was amazingly supportive to me. People ask, why didn't she marry the vicar then? But it was never on the cards. I had miles of healing to do first... and the funny thing is, Kit is rather like Tom: big and burly and gentle. And a wonderful sense of humour."

Twenty-five years ago the vicar first approached Susanne Hall to open his village

feet. She replied that she would not be a crowd-puller because the village saw her every day in the post office; and sent him a fiver.

Mr Chalcraft's first marriage ended after 22 years when his wife met someone else on an Open University course. His second marriage, to a store detective, was brief. Both divorces went through on an uncontested basis.

Five years ago Kit and the widow met again. "I'd just come to live in Swaffham and I saw him in Woolworths. Suddenly there he was, looking gaunt and ill. He told me everything had gone disastrously wrong. I had all the family at home so I asked him to join us for supper."

"We had a splendid evening and after that he would call, infrequently, for a cup of coffee. Then he went down with virulent glandular fever and when I discovered he was alone in the rectory eating on Disprin and boiled eggs, I said, very bossily, you'd better come here to be ill."

For him it was a relief to have someone to talk to. "His bishops knew he'd had this nightmare with his wife leaving, yet he'd never been asked for a chat or a meal or given any sort of pastoral care. Probably the reason we found such enormous solace with each other is we had both been through a very dark tunnel for a very long time."

As romance blossomed he sent her a glowing advert: "The Complete Kit for Summer". They did tell the bishop at once, and the suffragan bishop wrote urging discretion. Now that's tricky isn't it? The Bishop of Norwich said marriage was out of the question for us and always would be. It was not even negotiable. Can you imagine it?

"I wrote asking to see him myself, because nobody had ever discussed with Kit the reason for the breakdown of his marriages. He could have been a womaniser or a wife-beater, nobody ever inquired. But the bishop 'forwarded' my letter to his assistant. Being divorced was like having a criminal record, and he was very lucky to have a job at all."

"About 18 months ago we were told that if we married, Kit would be out — no salary, no livelihood, a trimmed pension not available until aged 65. And that after 27 years of

being a totally dedicated priest, probably at the expense of his personal life.

"He is a very goodly man, as anybody would tell you."

Mr Chalcraft signed a letter, drawn up by the diocesan registrar, declaring that he would "reside alone at the rectory". "And, in essence, he does. His things are there. We are condemned for supposedly living together 'in sin' — would that we had been! We've had no choice but to live a lie. But this is not about where Kit puts his head on the pillow at night to spend eight hours in unconscious sleep."

"It's the Church's hang-up about any sort of sexual relationship which is at the basis of this controversy, with the Borne Agains."

When her husband died, Mrs Hall went back to the BBC, but had to give up when her mother was flung from her horse while riding side-saddle at the age of 78. Soon afterwards, her 91-year-old mother-in-law had a stroke. After witnessing the prolonged terminal suffering of two proud and independent old ladies, Mrs Hall wrote an excellent article on euthanasia, since reprinted by *Exit*.

The Church's counsellor on clergy marriages has told them that Mr Chalcraft should quietly resign and marry her without fuss. Then Kit could be recycled to another area, as bishops have no understanding for "accommodating each other's casualties". So it is not only in the secular world that the Nimby principle operates. But why send him where he might not be wanted, she asks, after eight years among people who revere him?

At this point the vicar himself rang: he could not join us for lunch as he had two funeral visits to make. But he reported that the village post office at Gooderstone had set up a petition on his behalf.

"This is our dilemma. Either Kit leads a celibate life for the remainder of his ministry, in a lonely rectory in the back of beyond, or he makes the proverbial honest woman of me and gets the sack. The Church can dictate Kit's life but what about mine, condemned to remain a lonely widow for the rest of my life? And how could he possibly be a better priest, alone and celibate, going home to an empty house with no supper, a prey to every predatory lonely heart in the area?"

They laugh at the same things. They play golf. This summer they went to the war graves of the Somme. "Then we read Sebastian Faulks's *Birdsong*, and it all came alive."

"Kit is my teacher. I adore this man," she says. "He's so unworldly. He's been bowled out, middle-stump, first ball. What about Christian charity, redemption, forgiveness? At least our friends and our families are delighted for us. We just adore each other's company. And after you've been through a great deal of sadness — it's doubly sweet."

Why daytime TV is so much tripe

Television by the yard

It is a truism that architects should live in their own buildings, and the designers of open-plan offices be condemned to work in the corner between the poisonous houseplants and the clattering spiral staircase. It is in every etiquette book that a good hostess should sleep occasionally in her own guest bedrooms. We are forever urging transport ministers to ditch the limo, and everyone would like to strand the editor of their daily newspaper alone with the thing in a lift for six hours. Not as a punishment, you understand: just so that he or she can get a proper, jaundiced reader's-eye view.

So it was exciting to hear about Andy Allan, chief executive of Carlton TV. He recently spent a week at a health farm and had to watch daytime television, without even the usual anesthetic of caffeine and biscuits. Emerging from this ordeal, he told the Broadcasting Press Guild about his personal nightmare among the clones and drones of a terrible world, he never knew existed.

It was, he said, "like being in a flotation tank robbed of all sensory perceptions... those who are housebound should qualify for a special allowance for watching it". Why, he asked, could not ITV use the time to experiment with creative shows which might not pull the ratings, but which would make the day into the "nursery slopes" of television, where talent could blossom?

I rather take to Mr Allan for his honesty, but since he is prepared to be rude to the *Vanessas* and *Richards* and *Judies* who are only doing their best, only a forthright answer will do. Daytime TV is crummy, Mr Allan, because people like you don't watch it and — more important — don't want to meet the people who do. You are a megahype, megabucks man; daytime TV is for the lonely, the dispossessed, the trapped and underoccupied. You are too modern to be a Reithian, the improvement of minds, the broadening of sensitivities, the dissemination of beautiful things is not your bag. So you and your mates concentrate on a few peaktime gems, and otherwise order up programmes by the yard, like Orwell's party oligarchs producing

"prolefeed" books from writing-machines. You measure contentment by ratings, although it is proven that even the Test Card used to get watched, for company, and do not care if the programmes are candyfloss. While Vanessa Feltz is interviewing a woman who ran off with her gay boyfriend's boyfriend (only it didn't work out, so let's take a break and then hear about Paul whose wife had a secret life) you are safe in a restaurant, waving at other movers and shakers.

The heartening thing is that when your eyes were forced open, you stood up and admitted that you transmit tripe. Maybe every TV executive should have the treatment. I would nominate Alan Yentob of BBC1 for first immersion, especially after reading an entertaining squib by Nigel Williams entitled *Two and a Half Men in a Boat*, in which he and a friend try to get Mr Yentob on the river. Mr Williams is a friend of Mr Yentob, so presumably we

can trust his description of a manic figure in shades, who is always "just off to Montreux", despises ordinary gentle lives, and sits at the helm with a portable phone telling people called Norman he can't make LA, plotting against Channel 4, and ringing publishers, journalists, actors, politicians, comedians, agents, novelists, newspaper proprietors... advertising executives, the owners of new conglomerates, scientists, university professors and fashion designers". Mr Williams, who clearly quite likes this deranged figure, tries to explain:

"His eyes alight, his gestures wider and more expansive, as he plans some scheme... Alan's fantasy is a strong one, but it is a fantasy that rules all our lives. It is the fantasy that the world of politics and affairs is the real world, the only palpable one."

The sad thing is that the medium has, and sometimes fulfils, immense potential for good. But the longer television is run by people for whom television is everything, the less it offers. And for the trapped and the threatened, what should be a window to a wider and more humane world remains a slick, trick mirror, ordered by the yard.

LIBBY PURVES



Wrapping film

Last chance for the Church

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'The Church is hung up about sexual relations'

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AT NEWSAGENTS EVERY FRIDAY

Joanna Pitman meets the Turner prizewinning sculptor who makes sliced-bread beds and casts iron dolls in his own image

Wrapped naked in clingfilm for his art

To trip over the body of a dead man is not the best way to begin a day's work. Finding my way innocently into an artist's studio in Peckham yesterday I trod on a hand, looked down in horror and there he was, prostrate on the floor, looking to all the world as if he might have been shot in the head. As the police corner might have put it he was male, Caucasian, in his mid-40s, slim, 6ft tall and stark naked. It was more disconcerting still to discover that this was the body of Anthony Gormley, the celebrated 44-year-old British sculptor who on Tuesday night won the Turner Prize.

I should point out that this most famous son of Peckham had not been the victim of some hideous revenge killing by a disgruntled runner-up. I had trodden on one of his collection of Gormley bodies, cast in iron to his precise proportions.

Mr Gormley has made something of a habit of casting bodies in his own image. His studio is filled with dozens of life-sized naked men, similar to the iron dolls that can currently be seen hanging in uncomfortable silence from the ceiling and lying supine on the floor of the Tate Gallery in his winning exhibit, *Testing a World View*. In the current modern art aesthetic, which seems to reject anything beyond a nod to prettiness, Mr Gormley has turned out boldly handsome work that is harsh and rigid, but at the same time rather delicate and subtle and satisfying.

"I am wanting to express a feeling of the space that our bodies feel, so this kind of figure is not an image of the body, but more an expression of its place and shape," Mr Gormley says. "Art ought to be able to speak to anybody anywhere, and these pieces are very direct. Either you empathise with them or you don't. There is a feeling in making them of voluntarily giving up freedom to become an object in a

very intensely intimate way."

Mr Gormley gives up not only his freedom but also his dignity and virtually his life's breath to create these things. For two hours he stands naked and motionless while his wife laboriously wraps him up tight in layers of clingfilm, head to toe and all over the face, leaving one tiny breathing hole. Then bolts of woven jute are dipped in liquid plaster and layered over his mummified head and body.

From then on it is up to him to stand still, sometimes with his arms extended at right angles, sometimes assuming the position of a cat-burglar scaling a wall, and wait for two hours until the egg timer rings and it is time to be cut free of the rigid moulds.

"Everybody gets very excited about the idea of being wrapped naked in clingfilm by my wife. But there's no time to get excited. It requires very intense concentration."

I find his work quite comical, but Mr Gormley is rather ambivalent about this amateur critique. "There is a degree of irony, I suppose. Something to do with the fall of man. Sculptures always used to be seen on a plinth, but these have not only fallen off the plinth but they have fallen very much to the ground. I do deal with the idea of vulnerability in these figures of myself."

The living Gormley is tall and spare with delicate, precise features and, as if to make up for a certain vulnerability in his own appearance, he dresses in heavy-duty boots and a burly lumberjack waistcoat speckled, in the manner of all artists' shirts, with a stippling of white paint, as if he had been eating melted ice-cream with a fork.

Mr Gormley made his first iron doll in 1981, the same year that he created the controversial *Mother's Pride* piece, a sculpture made from 6,000 slices of white bread neatly piled to form a life-sized double bed with the indentations of two bodies lying side by side.

To create the indentations

exactly to match the human form, Mr Gormley meticulously ate his way through precisely the number of slices to account for the volume of his own body, and not a single crust more.

It became a ritual. For three months I avoided breakfast and came into my studio and silently ate five or six slices every half hour. His dedication was such that he didn't allow himself even a scraping of jam to help it down. But then Mr Gormley's dedication to his art has been characterised by this intensity since he decided, at the age of 23, to become a sculptor.

"I had read archaeology and anthropology at Cambridge and wasn't ready to go to art school, so I went off to India for two years and studied meditation."

On returning he did three consecutive art courses at

London colleges, while sculpting and supporting himself and his family by teaching. After ten years of withering toil without recognition, and a life of truly artistic penury, his sculptures suddenly began to attract comment and to merit exhibitions around Britain and overseas. In 1986 he finally gave up teaching and moved into full-time sculpting.

His next project looks, to my untrained eye, like a giant potato but is, he assures me, a commentary on the reaffirmation of the body, on the "inner experience". Inside the cast, which when finished will weigh 12 tons, is a leaping figure which has been extended outwards in all directions by precisely 32½ inches.

"I have broken the appearance barrier," he says. The giant potato may have to be broken, too. The last time he did one of these he couldn't get it out through the door of his studio.



Anthony Gormley: his next project looks like a giant potato but is, he says, a commentary on the "inner experience"

For three months I silently ate five or six slices every half hour

Last chance for the Chanel

Charity balls are a much-needed excuse to get out the ballgown

LIKE a good fashion victim, you've bought the ballgown and had the manicure. A thousand glossies have told us that this autumn has seen the return of glamour, gloss and "groom service". "High impact glamour" shouts the front of this month's *Harpers & Queen*. "Dresses that cause a stir" says *Vogue*.

There is only one problem: where to wear your newly-acquired glad-rags, now that social life has become so casual. "So, society in this country still functions around private dinner parties," says the designer Tomasz Starzewski. But you feel somewhat silly in your high heels, scarlet lips and jewel-coloured evening gown eating pasta in someone's kitchen. What a pity. As Hayden knew, it is inspiring to dress up — he would don his best wig before composing another masterpiece.

Enter the charity ball to the rescue, providing the perfect excuse for Christmas dressing up. Social life can obey the dictates of fashion, after all. Now you shall go to the ball. You shall unfurl the tissue paper and unzip the plastic cover protecting your new Chanel couture.

There is a growing love affair between haute couture and charity balls. Where else can you wear what Mr Starzewski calls "jewellery dresses" — something that will look good with the family baubles? Anyway, there isn't much choice. Study the social pages of our society magazines, and there are practically no balls other than those for good causes.

Lisa Armstrong, associate editor of *Vogue*, writes in the latest edition of her magazine:

"The charity-go-round in London is... one of the few contexts in which black tie and real evening gowns are still the norm. Catwalk confections that seem far too elaborate for late 20th-century life suddenly make sense when there's a charity ball on the horizon." As Sabrina Guinness, who is setting up her own charity to rescue children from the streets, says: "There are lots of women just longing for the excuse to get out their couture."

London boasts a variety of glamorous ladies who launch. They include Serena Balfour and Princess Michael of Kent, who this summer trooped off to Warsaw to have a ball and raise money for Polish charities.

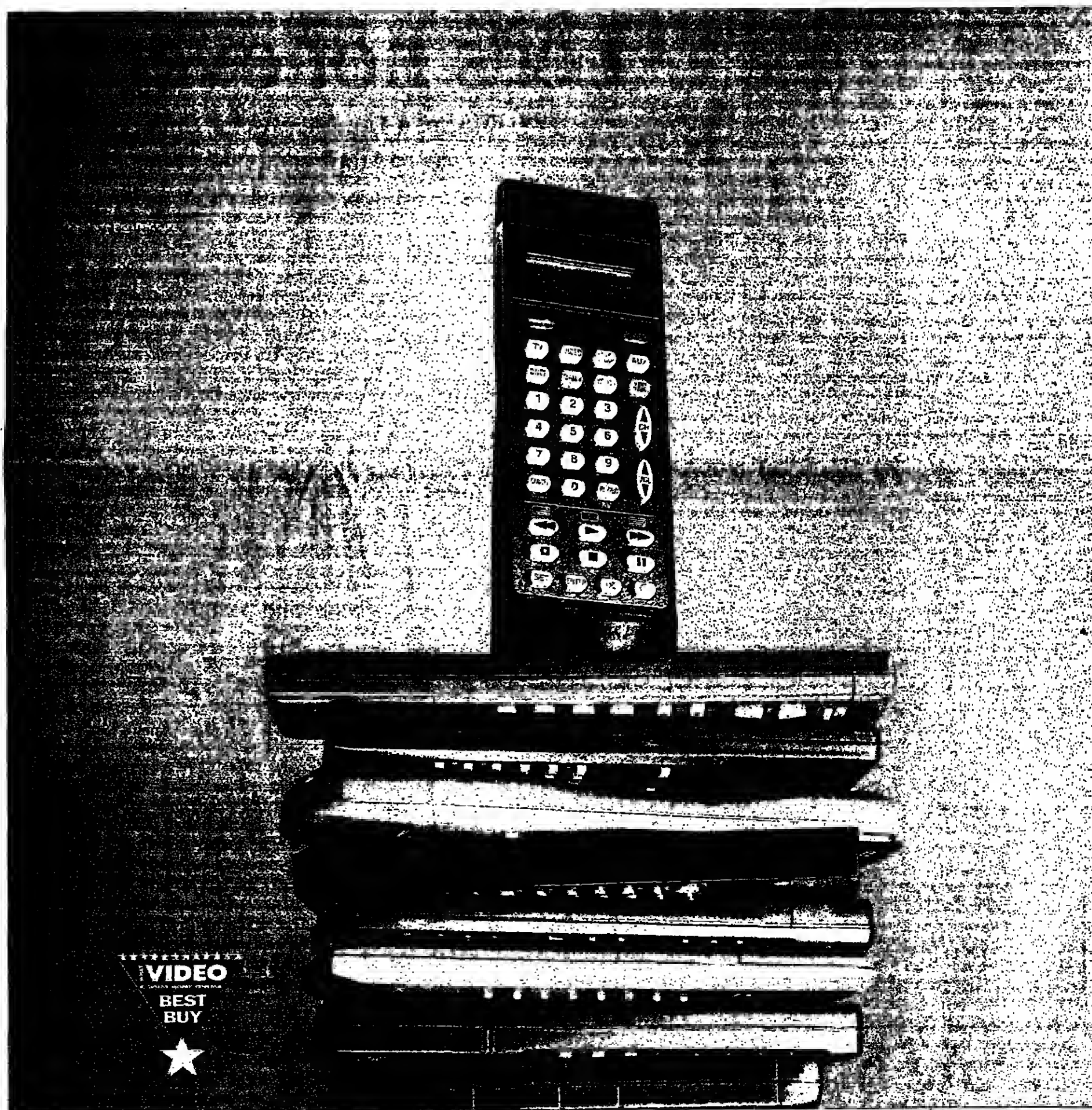
There are several advantages to such balls. "British women, so often racked with guilt when it comes to spending money on their wardrobes, don't seem to suffer the same qualms when it's all in a good cause," writes Ms Armstrong. And she says the more glamorous the attire, the more publicity such events garner: "No drop-dead outfits, no press."

They help to keep our fashion designers in work, too, and provide a showcase for their frocks. And husbands like them, as they can ogle fashion models — catwalks are a regular feature at charity shows — whose "boobs are out and skirts are up", according to Mr Starzewski.

And, of course, they help the charities. Now that the Princess of Wales has withdrawn from much of her high-profile charity work, good causes have been in need of a dollop of replacement glamour. The ball circuit is the perfect answer.



RACHEL KELLY



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Why the Queen holds the aces

Paul Johnson on John Major's silly constitutional game

Is John Major justified constitutionally in threatening Tory backbench rebels that he will have Parliament dissolved unless they toe the party line? Has the Cabinet the right to sign a "suicide pact", choosing a general election they know they will lose rather than surrender to backbenchers over Europe?

One thing should be made absolutely clear. It is not within the power of the Prime Minister to order a dissolution of Parliament. The right to do so is unquestionably part of the royal prerogative. When the general election of 1950 gave an indecisive verdict, leaving Clement Attlee's Labour Government with an overall majority of only eight, George VI's private secretary, Sir Alan Lascelles, conducted a constitutional investigation. The crucial sentence of the resulting memorandum reads: "The King would be perfectly entitled to refuse this request [to dissolve Parliament] if he were convinced that the present Parliament has not exhausted its present usefulness and that the country's interests demanded that the holding of another general election should be postponed as long as possible."

though he would be within his constitutional rights if he tried to form an administration first.

The other option would be to follow the precedent of 1905-06, ominous though it is for the Tories. A.J. Balfour, the Prime Minister in 1905, was in difficulties in some ways similar to John Major's. He had a perfectly good working majority, but his party was hopelessly split over tariffs. A large section, like today's federalists, were happy to accept a fortress mentality; another large section, like the Euro-sceptics, wanted all-out free trade. A third group just wanted a quiet life. Like Labour today, the Liberal Party was also divided.

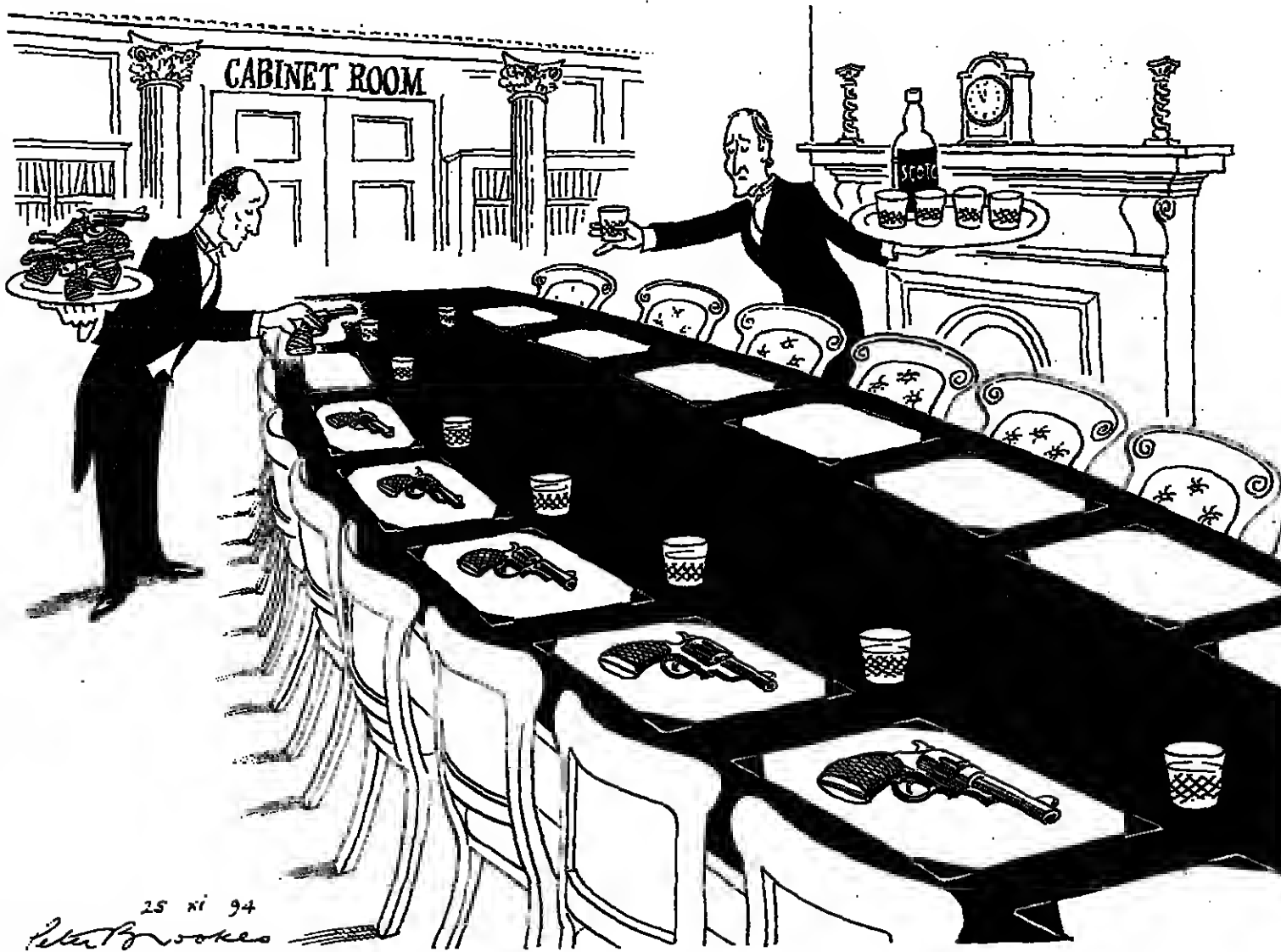
In an attempt to finesse the situation, Balfour submitted his resignation to Edward VII, without demanding a dissolution. The King declined to pick an alternative Tory Prime Minister, and turned instead to the Liberal leader, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. Balfour's calculation was that "C-B" would be unable to form a satisfactory administration, and that the dissolution would then take place, after the Liberals had been shown to be as divided as the Tories. But he got it wrong. C-B called the bluff of his opponents within his party, formed a strong Government, and then asked the King to dissolve, which Edward VII was ready to do. The result was a Liberal landslide, and the Tories were reduced to a pitiful remnant of 157. Balfour received a famous telegram from his confidante, Lady Salisbury, which read simply: "Damn, damn, damn."

John Major, being no authority on the constitution, may know nothing of this. But someone should tell him, because there is an imminent danger of the Tories going the same way now if a dissolution takes place. The Tory vote would almost certainly collapse if Major got a dissolution from the Queen or if she preferred to appoint Tony Blair Prime Minister first and then grant one.

For all these reasons, all sensible Tories should discourage John Major from trying to strong-arm backbenchers to vote more cash for Europe. It simply does not make sense to destroy the Conservative Party, perhaps for a generation, over an issue which is not genuinely a matter of confidence. The electorate certainly did not give Major authority in 1992 to send blank cheques to Brussels, and it is probable that a majority in the country would back the Tory rebels' opposition to raising our contribution.

That Major is getting into the habit of threatening dissolution whenever rebellion raises its head suggests not merely that he does not understand the constitution, but also that he is out of touch with reality. He should be brought back to earth, or replaced, before we all have to start saying Damn, damn, damn again.

Someone should tell him about the terrible precedents



Let's not overheat

Norman Lamont says the Chancellor has had luck on his side, but he should now proceed with caution

Kenneth Clarke is a bold and brave man. I hope that next week he will not be afraid to introduce a thoroughly dull Budget. Many of the Budgets that stand the test of time are dull ones. Indeed one of my main motives in introducing the unified Budget was to enable the Chancellor to produce more dull Budgets. When taxes were considered separately from spending, there was always a temptation to introduce dramatic tax changes which made the headlines for five or three days but left the tax laws ever more complicated.

Thanks to Nigel Lawson, we have a much more satisfactory tax system of personal and company tax than we used to have. There is a need for further changes in indirect taxation and VAT, but not this year. We need less tinkering with taxes, and more attention to the central task of controlling public expenditure.

With the unified Budget, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has much less need to talk about taxes, since he has so much to say about public expenditure. A sensible consolidating Budget is what is needed this year. It should concentrate on making sure that public expenditure is firmly under control for the next few years.

Dull it may be, but there is no reason why next week's Budget should not contain good news. For good news there is in abundance. Britain has one of the fastest growing economies in the world. We may grow as fast as America this year, and at the same time we have astonishingly low inflation. There has not been such a combination of favourable economic circumstances for very many years.

Why is that? Is it good luck? Is it because of the Government? We all remember Nye Bevan's gibe at Churchill during the War: "Defeat comes from God, victory comes from the Government." Much the same usually applies to governments' gloss on economic events. But try as they might, ministers cannot plausibly explain away all the bad news as having international causes beyond their control, and then expect to take credit for the good news.

However, what the Government undoubtedly does control is inflation. This Government is certainly entitled to the credit for inflation being at a

24-year low, and without this there would have been no recovery. It is claimed by some, including occasionally *The Times*, that Britain's economic recovery has happened only because the Government's economic policies were overturned when the exchange-rate mechanism broke up. That argument is vastly overstated.

There obviously would have been a recovery anyway — as there has been in France and Germany — as the Bundesbank lowered interest rates. Britain's recovery began in about the second quarter of 1991, but undoubtedly without our exit from the exchange-rate mechanism, that recovery would have been slower. Some would say this might have been a good thing. Time will tell. It is far too soon to come to a judgement. But there is a danger that our present recovery is too strong and too rapid. Debate on this will intensify in the coming months.

Even if there is some truth in the argument that the strength of the recovery stems from our exit from the mechanism, proponents of this view always ignore the reverse proposition: that without the mechanism, the conditions for recovery would not have been established. Inflation would not have come down. The exchange-rate mechanism made possible a brutal disinflation which was absolutely essential, although politically highly difficult. The most determined anti-inflation government would have found it a daunting task to impose this disinflation on its own.

The most dramatic piece of good news in Kenneth Clarke's Budget speech will be that Government borrowing is sharply down. For this again, the Government is fully entitled to take the credit. Controlling the public finances is the Government's responsibility, and that is

exactly what the Conservatives have done.

Many Conservative backbenchers, given the good news on borrowing, will urge the Government to give it all away again. We should be told that the second stage of VAT on fuel and power should be abandoned. Some may even call for income tax cuts. But there is no scope for tax cuts, and it would be the height of political and economic folly to reduce taxes now.

One reason why public-sector borrowing will be much lower than anticipated is that the growth of the economy has been much more rapid than forecast. But in my view the economy needs to slow down. And we need to plan Government finances and borrowing on the basis of long-term growth, not according to a short-term spurt which may prove unsustainable. We should only cut taxes when we have actually achieved low borrowing, not when we only have the expectation.

Undoubtedly the tax increases have been unpopular, and the Government naturally has been accused of breaking its promises. But the Government has failed to put across the reason for these tax increases. The reason was the impact of the recession on tax revenues. Most countries in Europe had to put up taxes for precisely the same reason. The same is also true of the United States. Yet today, even after these tax increases, Britain remains one of the least, if not the least taxed country in Europe.

The Government has nothing to apologise for, and in no way has it abandoned the philosophy and aims of the Conservative Party. As we made clear during the general election campaign, the first priority, even for a party of low taxation, must be to

look after the country's finances. We still have time in this Parliament to move towards our goal of a basic rate of 20p in the pound.

It is not only the tax increases and the growth in the economy that have improved the Government's finances. For it is much easier to control public spending when inflation is low and predictable, and even easier when it is low and falling. All this is part of Kenneth Clarke's good luck — and I don't begrudge him it in any way — for the Government doesn't have to work so hard, when inflation is falling, to find expenditure cuts. The fall in interest rates itself produces significant Government savings. For these reasons, the Chancellor will be failing to control spending unless he can announce in his Budget that the new control total has been reduced by about £6 billion.

In 1992 I introduced a new principle and mechanism for the control of public spending. "Lamont's rule" first extracted the cyclical elements, such as unemployment benefit, from public spending. It then stipulated that the rate of growth of spending must remain below the long-term rate of growth of the economy. All this is common sense. Applying the same policy today means that there should be large reductions in the money total for public spending. If this does not happen, it will mean that the State is taking an increasing share of our resources.

This is not the year for dramatic tax changes. I hope the Chancellor will not impose further reductions in mortgage tax relief on an already hard-pressed housing market. I hope he will not bother to tinker with pension reliefs, and savings reliefs, although I would be pleased if he did something to reduce the high rate of capital gains tax.

The greatest dilemma for the Chancellor is not actually in the Budget, it is in the management of the economy. The real question is whether the present rapid rate of growth is sustainable. There are grounds for anxiety about this. In a short time, we could be back in the situation we faced in 1988 or 1989, when it becomes increasingly difficult to slow the economy down, so that dramatic rises in interest rates become unavoidable. It seems probable that interest rates are going to rise around the world. So it would be wise to act now, in good time, rather than to be forced to act when it is almost too late.

This may be his last trick

Major has shown his weak hand, says Peter Riddell

John Major faces a political, not a constitutional, crisis. When politicians talk about constitutional proprieties, they are usually indulging in special pleading. Ministers and Euro-sceptic Tory MPs have both invoked the constitution over Mr Major's decision to treat as an issue of confidence Monday's vote on the Bill raising Britain's contribution to the European budget. Ministers have said that if the Government loses, the Prime Minister will seek a dissolution of Parliament, and that the Queen would grant it. But the Euro-sceptics argue that the Queen has discretion and that the party could continue in office under an alternative leader.

Each side is trying to call the other's bluff. But it is not just a "gigantic charade", as Tony Blair said yesterday. The stakes are high. There are still a few days left of the two weeks in each year when Tory MPs can trigger a leadership contest, and last night there was speculation about possible candidates, although a challenge is still improbable.

While the rebels are seeking maximum concessions before Monday's vote, ministers insist that the Government has to win on such a fundamental item of legislation, implementing international undertakings. Leading Cabinet Euro-sceptics, such as Michael Portillo, Peter Lilley, and John Redwood, yesterday publicly fell into line, saying that if the Government were to lose, "it would be inevitable that this Government would fall".

The mood is akin to the most feverish period during the Maastricht battles two years ago. A small group of Tory MPs is openly defying the Prime Minister, as Christopher Gill did to his face in the Commons yesterday. Mr Major is furious with them. Much will be said over the next few days, and assurances may be given that the Government will intensify the fight against fraud in European spending, as Labour is demanding in its amendment. This may satisfy some Euro-sceptics. The odds are still that the Bill will pass.

Nevertheless, if the Government loses, having explicitly treated this as an issue of confidence, then ministers are right about the constitutional precedents. The Prime Minister would seek a dissolution of Parliament, and it would be granted. Buckingham Palace always wants to avoid being dragged into controversy; political arguments should be sorted out by politicians.

A dissolution can, in theory, be refused if a Prime Minister loses control of his Cabinet. This is the option being discussed by the Euro-sceptics. They argue that the election threat is bogus, for if the Government lost the second-reading vote, ministers and MPs would rebel to prevent Mr Major going to the Palace, and would try to replace him. However, Mr Major has been careful to secure the support of his Cabinet, as he did throughout the Maastricht affair. Kenneth Clarke has revealed that the decision to turn the Bill into a confidence issue was taken by six senior ministers at a Downing Street dinner, and later informally agreed by the rest of the Cabinet. This disclosure created a potentially ambiguous position, but any doubts were removed by the unanimous Cabinet decision yesterday to reaffirm the line, and by the statements made by Euro-sceptic ministers. We know that Mr Major would have Cabinet authority for a dissolution.

This could only be stopped if a Cabinet split developed either before or after the vote. If Cabinet dissenters wanted to stop Mr Major going to the Palace, they would have to make their views known immediately. In practice, they would have to resign and then tell the Queen's advisers that someone other than Mr Major could command a majority in the Commons, in order to carry on in office without a election.

However, this would not be just an internal Tory party matter. If the vote is lost, the Opposition will claim that the Government has forfeited its authority and that there should be an election. Labour could argue that Mr Blair, rather than an alternative Tory leader, should be asked if he can form a Government. Mr Blair would then have the right to seek an election.

The messiness of these options would horrify the Queen's advisers, since whatever she decided would open her to criticism, and could be seen as compromising the Crown's impartiality. Hence it is probable that any request for a dissolution by Mr Major would be granted, to avoid controversy at a time when the monarchy is already under siege.

So the Cabinet's warnings about the implications of defeat are correct, and enough sceptics will probably back down on the night. But the damage will have been done. To threaten an election to secure passage of legislation has precedents, as veterans of the Wilson era have pointed out. But however successful, it is a humiliating admission of weakness. The events of the past week — the Maastricht memorandum and Patrick Nicholson's resignation, as well as the row over this Bill — have exposed the fragility of the Tory party. Last night's re-election of Sir Marcus Fox as chairman of the 1922 Committee makes little difference. Mr Major remains vulnerable rather than commanding.

Date blind

HIGHBROW magazines have seldom been required reading in Hollywood, but this week's *Spectator* received a glowing letter from the film industry's top names. Kevin Costner, Tom Cruise, Kirk Douglas, Charlton Heston, Steven Spielberg, Barbra Streisand and others are appalled at the "hateful scapegoating" contained in an article about a so-called "Jewish cabal" in Hollywood.

The stars complain that the article by the Los Angeles-based journalist William Cash means racist cant has become indistinguishable from thoughtful commentary. They liken it to the "Inquisition in 13th-century Spain".

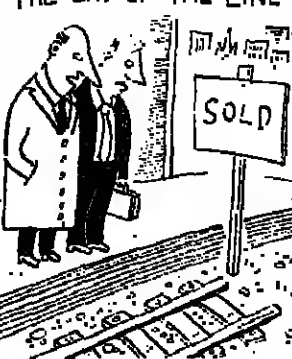
A pity, then, that the actors did not think to turn to their history books before writing the letter. As any schoolgirl knows, the famous Spanish Inquisition was a 15th-century phenomenon — and an ugly one at that.

Dominic Lawson, the magazine's editor, is unimpressed. Douglas, after all, played a memorable Spartacus; Costner acted Robin Hood; and Heston was a burly Ben Hur. "Hollywood has always been adept at the rewriting

of history," said Lawson yesterday. "The open letter from Hollywood is a wonderful thing. The most recent example to be published in this country was that of Mr and Mrs Richard Gere, who in May announced to *The Times* their undying love and the solidity of their marriage."

"It is to be regretted that the Geres' subsequent separation has prevented them from collaborating with the Hollywood open letter which adorns this issue."

I'M TELLING YOU, THIS GOVERNMENT'S REACHED THE END OF THE LINE



November's unseasonal temperature has been playing havoc with Ken Livingstone's news and frogs, which are unusually active for the time of year. "In 40 years, I have never known them spawn in November," he says. "But there's no stopping them now."

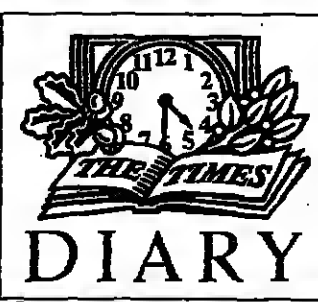
Odd ode

PATRICK NICHOLLS, the former deputy chairman of the Tory Party, struck an unusual comparison in his xenophobic West Country newspaper article about the evils of Europe. "I prefer the national anthem of my Queen to the strains of Beethoven's Fifth," he said.

Could he have meant Beethoven's Ninth, which finishes with Schiller's moving *Ode to Joy* and has become the European anthem? No one was available in Nicholls's office to explain the curiosity yesterday. But he clearly didn't see eye to eye with E.M. Forster, who described Beethoven's Fifth in *Howard's End* as "the most sublime noise ever to penetrate into the ear of man".

Ale fellow

THE PRINCE of Wales is to open the McDonald Institute — for archaeological research, not ham-



burger studies — at Cambridge today. The event will see the Prince unceremoniously fond memories. For it was in archaeology and anthropology at Trinity College that he took his degree in the 1960s. There had been hopes that the royal palate might have been tickled during the ceremony by a tippie of Egyptian origin. "We tried to replicate Egyptian beer using research from organic remains in pottery vessels," says Dr Chris Scarre, assistant director at the institute. "The Scottish & Newcastle brewery even made up a batch for us but I'm afraid it was not enormously palatable."

Chanter

FLICKERING candles and a troupe of fake monks in brown cassocks in a Chelsea restaurant yesterday put Melvyn Bragg in

nostalgic mood. He had been invited to debate the role of sacred music in contemporary life at the launch of the latest Gregorian chant-topping disc, *Canto Noel*, cut by the refring monks of Silos in Spain.

"I was brought up a high Anglican, and was a choirboy from the age of six all the way through until my time at Oxford. I have encountered a lot of monks and sung a lot of Gregorian chant in my time," said the TV presenter, who sadly was not asked to break into song.

Poor light

LORD LICHFIELD will be at Claridge's today for a party to launch *Courvoisier's Book of the Best*, the travel guide he founded ten years ago. It will, however, be a disappointing occasion for the Queen's photographer cousin. The lord's stately home, Shugborough Hall in Staffordshire, which has featured as a top tourist attraction in every edition so far, has been dropped by the celebrity panel of judges. "I am deeply distressed," he said yesterday. "But at least it will mean fewer visitors."

Rising vamp

SOMETIMES AN ACTRESS just

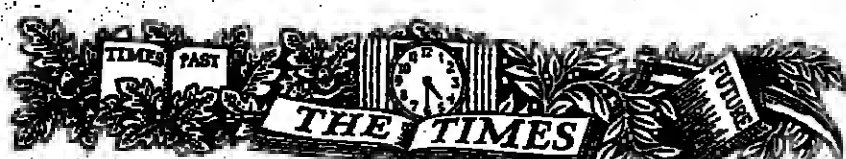


In the stars: Jessica Martin

knows when a part is hers. Jessica Martin is to play John of Gaunt's vampish mistress Alice Peres in the *Blackadder*-style comedy *The Court Jester*, which is scheduled to open at the Warehouse Theatre, Croydon, next month.

This summer Martin was visiting John of Gaunt's old home, Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire, together with her friend Hayley Mills. "My mobile phone rang and my agent told me I had the audition. I felt like John of Gaunt was standing on my shoulder."

P.H.S.



OVER THE HURDLE

The new world trade body should set a pattern for the future

The Uruguay Round, a global deal to liberalise world trade and strengthen the rules which govern it, has almost certainly been rescued from eleventh-hour catastrophe. That is the significance of the deal stitched together this week between President Clinton and Robert Dole, the Republican leader of the Senate. The dispute over ratification of the round has revealed American politics at its least edifying. Since the mid-1980s, successive Republican administrations have fought for this treaty. But on the ground that the new World Trade Organisation (WTO) it creates could diminish American sovereignty in trading matters, Mr Dole threatened to use his considerable influence to abort 11 years of ultimately successful effort.

Mr Dole has now promised "a big, big vote" in favour of ratification next week, when Congress convenes to vote on the treaty. That is what matters: the concessions he won are of minor import. The dispute over sovereignty derives from the new WTO disputes procedure, which would end the powers of governments under Gatt to veto decisions which found them to be in breach of trading rules. The Clinton Administration has promised to create a judicial panel to monitor WTO rulings on trade disputes. If it decides that, in a five-year period, three rulings have been "arbitrary and capricious", Congress will be allowed to vote on withdrawing from the WTO. But this is a smoke-and-mirrors concession: on six months' notice, any state can withdraw. It is a tiny price to pay for avoiding a repetition of the 1940s, when the same Congressional worries about sovereignty prevented the creation of an International Trade Organisation (ITO). At stake in Congress is nothing less than the survival of the liberal trading system.

The European Union should therefore stifle the temptation to protest that the US is unfairly protecting its unilateral freedom of action in trade, and get this treaty on its own books within the next two weeks. The EU is

in no position to lecture America: it has taken months to settle a legal dispute, itself concerned with sovereignty, about whether power to ratify the treaty lies with the Commission or member states. The Uruguay Round could achieve far more than any number of EU public investment programmes to create millions of jobs and a new era of trade-led prosperity.

A separate decision, in Geneva this week, removes the only reservation about the new WTO that free traders might legitimately entertain. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, as its name suggests, is not so much an organisation as a set of binding, mutually agreed trading rules. States do not belong by right, as they do to the United Nations: they have first to meet Gatt conditions. That has saved Gatt from the politicisation which plagues UN agencies, and kept its secretariat lean, expert, and focused on its original remit. But the UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has made no secret of his desire to fold the new WTO into the United Nations as a specialised agency — or his ambition to set up a new Economic Security Council in New York, to which it would be subordinate.

This week, the WTO's preparatory committee decisively rebuffed the invitation. Developing countries, who have come to realise the value of keeping trade negotiations out of the political arena, were as adamantly opposed to UN affiliation as Western governments. The WTO will obviously work closely with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund — as the Bretton Woods architects of the stillborn ITO always intended. But to be effective, it must be as free as the Bank and Fund to hire on the basis of merit alone, and to fend off the constraints of UN bureaucracies. The WTO could be the first of a new generation of rule-based global organisations. Nothing should now be allowed to hinder its inauguration on January 1.

NEW MAPS FOR WHITEHALL

An early test for the Government's ethical concerns

Yesterday's Commons report on the role of the Civil Service is one of the most eagerly awaited papers to be published by a parliamentary select committee. The reforms of the public service in the last decade have been as contentious as they have been far-reaching. They have fostered a sense of unease among civil servants that the limits of their responsibilities need fresh definition. The hearings of the Scott inquiry, likewise, have stoked fears that the doctrine of Civil Service impartiality is not as strong as it used to be. The report by the Treasury and Civil Service select committee is a welcome attempt to address these concerns.

Several of the MPs' arguments are misguided. Their criticisms of the market testing programme underestimate the gains which the contracting out of public service functions have brought. Abolishing the Civil Service fast stream, as the committee recommends in guarded language, would be foolish, destroying a successful system which merely needs reform. In general, however, the committee's members have approached the Government's programme of public service reform constructively. Their proposals for the Next Steps agencies and the performance targets they are set by central government are particularly helpful.

In practice, they will probably pay more attention to the sections on ministerial resignation. This is the most vexed constitutional question faced by the select committee and they have not answered it satisfactorily. The report's robust demand that "any minister who has been found to have knowingly misled Parliament should resign" disguises its essential uncertainty regarding other aspects of the problem.

The committee's members may be right to reject the fine distinction drawn by Sir Robin Butler, the Head of the Civil Service, between ministerial accountability and ministerial responsibility. But they do not respond to the problem he was trying to resolve. A minister must indeed remain accountable to Parliament for failures in his department, in the sense that he must disclose and explain them to the House. But can he truly be said to be responsible for every error made by distant officials working in a Next Steps agency for an independent chief executive?

The report is more successful in its drafting of a new Civil Service code of ethics. The need for such a code has long been apparent and the report's recommendation reflects a long campaign by senior civil servants and politicians. The combination of duties and rights drafted by the committee should attract little controversy, reasserting the importance of Civil Service neutrality, confidentiality and the primary obligation of civil servants to uphold the law.

The Government is likely to be less happy with the report's recommendation that a new Civil Service commission be established to enforce the code. Under present arrangements, civil servants can only report their anxieties to Sir Robin. This has not proved a successful system of self-regulation. In the last nine years — a period including the events under investigation by Lord Justice Scott — only one such appeal has been made to the Head of the Civil Service. A better system is required. The Government's response to this proposal will be a practical test of its declared commitment to the reform of public service ethics.

JAPANESE HALL

Better the LSE than another giant office block

Occupying one of the most magnificent sites in the capital, home for most of this century to London's government, County Hall looks set to become barely more than an office block. After ministers turned down an ambitious bid from the London School of Economics in 1992 to transform the site into a European centre of learning to rival France's Ecole Normale d'Administration, County Hall was sold to a Japanese developer for use as a hotel and leisure centre. Now Shiryama Shokusan Ltd says that it has abandoned plans for the hotel; it intends instead to create offices and exhibition space to promote European-Asian ties.

The ties are perfectly worthwhile. But do they really have to happen in London's most prestigious site after Buckingham Palace and the Houses of Parliament? County Hall ought ideally still to be a public building, home to a scaled-down London government. The next best solution would have been a new home for the LSE. Londoners only reluctantly accepted the idea of a hotel, mollified partly by the involvement of Richard Branson in its management. This latest proposal should not see the light of day.

Government ministers will doubtless claim that they have no aegis in this matter. If the buck passes to the London Residuary body, which sold County Hall to Shiryama, it will as quickly be transferred to Lambeth Council, which gave planning permission for the hotel project. In a twist of political irony, then, the fate of the building

that became vacant because of the Government's antipathy to the "loony" left will be determined by the only "loony" left Labour local authority remaining in the country.

Lambeth would love to see the building returned to its original use. It would not be surprising if planning consent for this new purpose were held up until a general election, which Labour might win. Then, perhaps, the building could be bought back for the nation and reclaimed as the seat of the capital's government. If the Government wanted to stymie such a plan, though, it has one option. The only other body that has planning permission for County Hall is the LSE. In 1992, ministers judged that the college did not have money to refurbish the building and that the Treasury would be forced to step in. Yet now there is money available for grand projects of public merit.

If Lambeth were to refuse planning consent, perhaps Shiryama could be persuaded to sell. The Millennium Commission might be persuaded to back a new LSE bid for the site, particularly if the LSE could produce an imaginative proposal for a centre for London's youth to be combined with university buildings. Since much of St Thomas' Hospital next door may soon become vacant in the reorganisation of London hospitals, the south bank of the Thames opposite Westminster could be turned into London's answer to the *rive gauche*. Now that would be an exciting use of millennium funds.

Division in the Tory ranks

From Mr Lewis Stretch

Sir, Kenneth Clarke's comments on Monday's "vote of confidence" in the Commons (report, November 24) shows how completely he and his colleagues are out of touch with feeling in the country. We do not want any of the present Cabinet as Prime Minister; they are all too deeply compromised.

The only hope the Conservatives have of avoiding an electoral debacle lies in quickly electing some senior minister as a perhaps temporary leader, to knock some sense into their heads and allow them to emerge as a coherent party.

Moreover, withholding the money for the increase in the Brussels budget would be an excellent lesson for Europe that genuine parliamentary democracy involves the right to refuse to ratify agreements of which Parliament disapproves, and the right to deny any government the funds it needs to pursue policies with which Parliament disagrees.

We might once again save Europe by our example, and keep the co-operation we all need on the right lines.

Yours faithfully,
LEWIS STRETCH,
3 Laroc Close,
Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire,
November 24.

From Vice-Admiral Sir Louis Le Bailly

Sir, Your report today that any Tory constituency party failing to deselect its MP, should be not vote in accordance with a prime ministerial diktat, might itself be disbanded, shows with certainty that Lord Hall'sham's prediction of an "elective dictatorship" is now with us.

It was once unthinkable in our democracy, but clearly the next step is to abolish the "elective". This, after all, is roughly what happened to democracy in Germany in the 1930s.

Yours truly,
LOUIS LE BAILLY,
St Tudy, Bodmin, Cornwall,
November 24.

From Mr J. B. da Silva

Sir, When I was at school in the 1930s we were encouraged to join the League of Nations Union and I remember wearing its distinctive tie. Like the European Union now, the League of Nations was then something that all political parties expected right-thinking people to support through faith rather than reason. As we realised our cost in 1939, that faith was wholly misplaced.

Is this not the kind of situation in which the feelings of the country should be tested in a general election or referendum?

Yours truly,
JOHN DA SILVA,
Cope Close, Virginia Water, Surrey,
November 22.

From Mr John Coutts

Sir, The unelected Viscount Mountgarret tells us (letter, November 23) that "people in this country" do not want closer political ties with Europe. Which country, please? He writes of "Britain's independence", claiming that "Englishmen want to remain English".

Hurrah for Scotland in Europe! Long live Neil Kinnock, our Welshman in Brussels!

Yours sincerely,
JOHN COUTTS,
118 Old Road East, Gravesend, Kent.

Spitfire sale

From Mrs Pamela M. Trippett

Sir, Spitfire Mark XIX, PS853, of the Battle of Britain memorial flight, is included in Sotheby's sale on November 26 of historic aircraft and aeronautics (report, earlier editions, November 21). This machine, in flying condition, with an estimate of £350,000 to £450,000, is being sold on instruction from the Ministry of Defence.

Are we too impoverished that we can no longer maintain the machines that, along with their crews, made it possible for us to have any heritage at all? Is nothing sacred to this Government?

Yours faithfully,
P. M. TRIPPETT,
7 Old School Court,
Upper Sheringham,
Sheringham, Norfolk.

Future of free trade

From Mr Eric R. Berryman

Sir, Tim Congdon ("Goldsmith's closed book", November 18) seems to suggest that there will always be enough different kinds of profitable specialisation to enable each country to retain a few with which to earn its living in a world of completely open competition and widely differing wage costs. Postwar history suggests that this is not true.

Shortly after the Second World War, the Japanese optical industry took over our camera market, followed by most of our radio, television, typewriter and motor cycle business, and a large part of our motor industry.

Economists assured us that losing these specialisations would do little harm since we had an enormous ascendancy in banking, insurance and financial services, which they presumably regarded as our inalienable specialisation. But the domino effect con-

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Result of Falklands sovereignty poll

From the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Argentina

Sir, The failure over the opinion poll conducted in the Falkland Islands (reports, November 3 and 4) calls for explanation and comment.

The poll was organised by MORI, at the request of their Argentine colleagues, Moray y Arsujo, Noguera y Asociados, for companies operating in our country whose need for information about business prospects in the South Atlantic — fisheries, oil exploration, etc. — is self-evident.

For Argentina the possibility of purchasing sovereignty over the islands does not arise. The task we have undertaken is their recovery, through diplomatic channels and in peace. This was recently established in our constitution, which also guarantees respect for the islanders' lifestyle, the continuation of common law, and the right to decide on education, taxes and justice.

We have stated that we are ready to consider the possibility of economic compensation — Sir Alan Walters, the economist who was a member of Mrs

Thatcher's team, first expressed the idea in 1993 — and we realise that such compensation would need to be on a significant scale. However, the specific amounts mentioned in your reports as potentially on offer to individual islanders ("about £1 million") were based on the questions asked by the pollsters. They in no way reflect our own thinking on the matter.

The poll shows an understandable diversity of opinion among the islanders: 12 per cent state they are prepared to discuss sovereignty and 28 per cent say they would be ready to consider some sort of compensation, in spite of the fact that Argentina has made no offer yet.

The fact that Argentina is considering these options should not be regarded as offensive to anybody. Any offer may be accepted or rejected. Opinions and options may evolve in time.

Yours sincerely,
GUIDO DI TELLA,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Palacio San Martin,
Buenos Aires,
November 17.

History lessons

From Mr Stuart Sexton

Sir, Matthew Parris (November 21) still knows very little about the Falklands, and his whimsical attitude of "let's hand them over to Argentina" is unforgivable.

History does matter. British sovereignty over the Falklands was established years before the sovereign state of Argentina even existed, and the Spanish colony which preceded Argentina never established sovereignty over the Falklands either.

For almost two centuries this country, not Argentina, has sustained the Falklands and their people, even at some cost to the British exchequer. Now that the people of the Falklands, and Britain indirectly, are likely to gain from possible oil and gas reserves, Argentina wants the islands and Parris says it can have them.

Yours etc,
STUART SEXTON (Director,
Independent Primary and Secondary Education Trust Education Unit),
Warrington Park School,
Cheltenham Common,
Warrington, Surrey,
November 21.

From Dr Valerie Goldberg

Sir, Has Mr Parris forgotten just how awful the pre-Falklands Argentinian government was, with thousands of people "disappeared"?

If a Falklands deal had been negotiated in 1980, General Galtieri would have become a national hero and the killing and torture would have continued indefinitely, with the armed

services backing the junta so firmly. Mr Parris should not fret. He is only guilty of doing the right thing for the wrong reasons, infinitely better than doing the wrong thing for the right reasons.

Yours faithfully,
VALERIE GOLDBERG,
6 Holcroft Avenue,
Wembley, Middlesex,
November 21.

From Lady de Zulueta

Sir, As an Anglo-Argentine myself, I was very impressed with Matthew Parris's sensible article on the future of the Falkland Islands. The late Nicholas Ridley, in my opinion, was quite right to suggest a "leaseback" compromise with Argentina, as Mr Parris says.

It brings to mind an occasion during the Second World War, when I was a pupil at a British school in Buenos Aires. By law, the teaching in the morning was in English, and in the afternoon in Spanish. On one occasion a school's inspector was on a visit and questioned a friend of mine (later to become a successful diplomat) as to whom the Malvinas (Falkland Islands) belonged.

She thought for a moment and then replied: "I think in the morning they are British, and in the afternoon they are Argentinian."

Difficult, no doubt, to put into practice, but Mr Parris proposes a sensible alternative.

Yours sincerely,
MARIE-LOUISE DE ZULUETA,
Flat 5, 7 Prince's Gate, SW7,
November 21.

Immunisation debate

From Mr Nicholas Anderson

Sir, Dr Harvey Marcovitch ("Inject some truth into vaccine debate", Body and Mind, November 22) is to be commended for urging honesty about the risks of the current immunisation programme. For those engaged in the fight against myelo-encephalitis (ME) — a disease of which many are convinced that vaccines are one of the triggers — his article serves to raise yet more questions.

If some 33 babies a year have been saved from disability by congenital rubella syndrome, how much per baby did that cost? On the basis of the current programme, costing about £20 million, the cost per baby is over £600,000. Would the public really approve in advance this level of expenditure for what Dr Marcovitch, when referring to terminations of pregnancy as a result of vaccines, dismisses as a "handful" of cases?

Mass immunisation against measles, which as a wild disease was once little more than a minor inconvenience, has actually caused it to be a much greater danger to older children and adults. The ultimate truth in this debate (letters, October 31, November 3, 5, 9, 14) requires more disclosure about the commercial interests which we suspect to be at work behind the scenes.

Yours sincerely,
NICK ANDERSON (Director),
Action for M.E.,
PO Box 1302,
Wells, Somerset BA5 2WE.

Rights for peers

From the Honourable Mrs Blackett

Sir, If Lord Monkswell (letter, November 23) and his fellow peers seriously wish the House of Lords to continue into the 21st century, then they must realise that male liberation is the only option. They must shed their fear of women and admit their equality.

Only when the eldest child, irrespective of sex, is allowed to inherit their family title will Lord Monkswell's vision of the House being able to "offer advice on virtually any subject" be realised.

Yours faithfully,
GEVA BLACKETT,
Clunie Cottage,
Braemar, Aberdeenshire,
November 23.

A little learning

From Mr Andrew Selkirk

Sir, That very valuable publication, *Postcode Update*, tells us in its latest edition (number 17) that Little Fakenham (in Norfolk) is in future to be known as Fakenham Magna.

Does this mean that Little Fakenham is ageing ideas above its station? Or has a very worthy attempt by the Royal Mail to re-introduce Latin gone, just very slightly, astray?

Yours pedantically,
ANDREW SELKIRK,
9 Nassington Road, NW3,
November 23.

From Mr Peter Dawson

Sir, Has Tim Congdon fully understood Jimmy Goldsmith's worry about free trade?

Surely Goldsmith is right to be concerned that Europe should maintain its stability and deeply-rooted cultural values, and that there are limits to the pace of change in society which can be accommodated with material and social advantage. It is common sense rather than cranky to regard as posing us a threat countries which can develop and exploit advanced technologies while their own people accept living standards lower than those in Europe.

We need to address problems ahead of us, beware of the idea that history teaches anything much and of burying our heads in the sand of 18th-century economic theory.

Yours faithfully,
PETER DAWSON,
9 Arnold's Way,
Cumnor Hill, Oxford.

Distorted image of medieval monks?

From Mr C. F. W. Chanter

Sir, Whilst much applauding your leader today on monastic over-indulgence, I feel that I must expand your argument that caricature should not be allowed to belittle the rich achievements of the medieval monks. I do so because the disclosure of the truth about life in pre-Reformation times and since then is crucial in bringing together the Anglican and Catholic communities in mutual understanding.

You are quite correct in stating that Protestant propaganda shaped national memory in the early stages, but the extent to which the years of Whig political oligarchy are to blame for strengthening prejudice against Catholicism has been largely forgotten.

That the Whigs wrote the history books is evident on almost every page in which any anti-Catholic stance may be brought to bear.

They provide us with a trail of anti-Catholic inventions, starting with wild tales of monastic orgies before the "ethnic cleansing" of the Reformation and leading us, via the Throckmorton, Babington and Popish plots, to equally distorted accounts of the Jacobite rebellions.

It is 400 years too late to adequately redress the balance but in researching to write a book on this subject I hope through your indulgence, Sir, to widen the understanding of some great injustices.

Yours faithfully,
C. F. W. CHANTER,
Rectory Farm Cottage,
Kittisford, Nr Wellington, Somerset,
November 23.

From Professor Emeritus Luke Herrmann

Sir, You illustrate your medieval "news" today with what you describe as "a contemporary engraving of 16th-century monastic life". It is in fact a wholly imaginary 19th-century (German?) print, fully signed and dated (1877), and belongs to the so-called "Red Cardinal School", still popular with some collectors.

The accompanying photograph of the "modern-day Benedictines" was presumably chosen because the monk in front is eating out of a yoghurt pot enclosed in two empty ones, perhaps a comment on 20th-century "monkish gluttony". Your illustrations to this item can please neither monkish ghosts nor living monks.

Yours faithfully,
LUKE HERRMANN,
The Coombes, Sibbertoft,
Market Harborough, Leicestershire,
November 23.

From Mr Trevor Stevens

Sir, I had thought that the monks' allowance of a gallon of ale a day, an allowance also made in some nunneries, actually referred to small beer — a drink very light in alcoholic content often used as a substitute for drinking water in places where this may have been tainted.

If this is so, then the caloric content is likely to have been rather less than your report implies. I am still not convinced that it was common for cloisters to re-echo to the sounds of drunken revelry.

Yours sincerely,
TREVOR STEVENS
(Head of History),
Rannoch School,
Rannoch, by Pitlochry, Perthshire,
November 23.

From Dr Juliet M. Rogers

The scholarly evidence for monastic overindulgence is strengthened by corroborative skeletal evidence. Skeletal remains from monastic burial sites display a higher frequency than normal of a particular form of spinal fusion which is associated in many cases with obesity.

These changes are not limited to monks' skeletons, however, but are also found more often than would normally be expected in episcopal and other priestly burial groups. Particularly fine examples of these changes were found among the skeletons of the Saxon bishops of Wells.

Yours faithfully,
JULIET ROGERS
(Lecturer in Palaeopathology),
University of Bristol,
Department of Medicine,
Bristol Royal Infirmary,
Bristol BS2 8HW,
November 24.

Town twinnings

From His Honour Judge Finney

Sir, On a visit to Rutland some weeks ago my wife and I passed through a small village which proudly displayed at entrance and exit (not very far apart) the information, "Twinned with Paris" (letters, November 11, 16). I think they knew what they were doing.

Yours faithfully,
JARLATH FINNEY,
The Crown Court,
Woodall House,
Lordship Lane, Wood Green, NZ2,
November 16.

Business letters, page 29

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 071-782 5046.

OBITUARIES

REAR-ADMIRAL BEN BRYANT

Rear-Admiral Ben Bryant, CB, DSO and two Bars, DSC, wartime submarine commander and Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel, 1954-57, died on November 23 aged 89. He was born on September 16, 1905.

COMBAT decorations were never easily come by in the wartime navy: contact with the enemy in the vast expanses of the sea was generally a transient business, often unsatisfactory in outcome. Ben Bryant's remarkable haul of three DSOs and a DSC therefore speaks volumes for a career as a submariner in which his natural pugnacity was allied to extreme guile and a thorough mastery of the element in which he operated.

As commanding officer of two famous submarines, *Sealion* and *Safari*, he sank a total of 32 vessels in the Atlantic and Mediterranean theatres between 1939 and 1943. This involved him at various times in braving the narrow waters of the Kattegat and the shallows off the North African coast to get at his prey.

Submariners are by nature a different breed from the generality of seagoing men. Their patrols are a lonely business requiring an aggressive spirit, beyond direct tactical control. Death, when it comes, often happens with terrifying suddenness, in darkness, and tends to involve the entire submarine's crew. Few prisoners are taken in submarine warfare.

It was a truly buccannery spirit and not mere jingoism that prompted Bryant to describe his way of "tracking down and beating up the enemy on his doorstep" as the "finest sport in the world". Whenever the circumstances offered him a fair chance, he liked to surface under the eyes of enemy shore batteries and destroy his target with the three-inch gun the S-class submarines mounted. On occasions when he missed with torpedoes or left his victim damaged but afloat, he would, if enemy ships were not about, surface and let his well-drilled gun crew get into action. They were, capable of putting the first round on target within 20 seconds of breaking surface.

The son of an Indian civil servant, Benjamin Bryant was educated at Oundle and entered the Royal Navy at the age of 18. At the earliest opportunity he volunteered to specialise in submarines, and joined his first boat in 1927. After service on the China station from 1932 to 1934 he qualified for command of a submarine and was appointed in 1938 to the 700-ton *Sealion*. Soon after war broke out his flotilla was moved in the spring of 1940 to fight in the dangerously shallow waters and almost continuous daylight



Bryant (foreground), his first lieutenant and two other members of *Sealion's* crew back in harbour after a successful patrol

of the Norwegian campaign. His many exploits in the North Sea, Skagerrak and Kattegat, from which few of his brother commanding officers returned, included bringing his submarine safely home after both her periscopes had been wiped out by the hull of an enemy transport as he tried to get into an attacking position on a German convoy. In 1940 he won the DSC for his part in these dangerous operations.

In October 1941 he took over the new submarine *Safari* based at Malta. The campaign to sink Axis shipping supplying the German and Italian armies in North Africa was at its most intense. This required British submarines to take great risks close inshore against transports carrying vital supplies. Bryant's record in this campaign was quite remarkable. In ten months from July 1942 to April 1943 he won three

DSOs for the skill and aggression with which he carried the attack to enemy shipping, sometimes venturing into the Straits of Messina, between Italy and Sicily, at other times closing up to the North African coast in pursuit of Axis vessels which hugged the shoreline for their own protection. His targets ranged from ammunition ships through tank landing craft to minesweepers.

Although relentless in attack he was, however, as humane as the conditions of war could permit to the crews of the vessels he sank, and often went to some lengths to rescue survivors.

When Bryant entered harbour after his last patrol, the Jolly Roger flying from *Safari's* periscope showed 14 white bars, one for each ship sunk by torpedo and four more for ships damaged. Additionally, he had sunk 15 by gunfire adding up to a total of

45,000 tons of Axis shipping destroyed. When he was eventually able to get ashore and attend an investiture in Britain in July 1943, it was to receive from the King all three of the DSOs he had earned at once, an unusual occurrence.

Promoted captain, he was, after the conclusion of his Mediterranean forays, given command of the 7th and 3rd Submarine Flotillas in home waters, before moving to the Far East in 1945. There he took command of the 4th Submarine Flotilla in the British Pacific Fleet.

In 1948 he succeeded the then Flag Officer Submarines who was suddenly taken seriously ill. The need to endow submarines with higher and quieter underwater speeds, principally for anti-submarine warfare, called for streamlining. This meant the removal of the deck-mounted gun to which Bryant was so addicted from his successful wartime use of it. When this course was proposed for the new "A" class of submarine which was being introduced, Bryant stood out against the innovation. "Rather than remove the four-inch gun," he declared, "I would add a second one." He did not get his second gun, but some A-Class submarines did at least retain one four-inch mounting.

In 1951 Bryant was appointed commander of the naval barracks at Devonport before going to sea again in 1953 as flag captain to the Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean (then Admiral Mountbatten). Thereafter he was promoted to rear-admiral and was appointed Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel, responsible for training and manpower.

It was a surprise to his many admirers that no further naval employment was offered a man whose qualities of leadership and magnetic personality had so much to offer. Industry was the beneficiary of his experience, however, and in the year of his retirement he joined Rolls-Royce as manager of the company's Scottish factories. He held this post until his final retirement in 1968. This second career enabled him to enjoy his favourite country pursuits for the next ten years.

He retired fully to Storrington, where he remained an active member of the West Sussex Golf Club well into his eighties, still a strikingly handsome man with an unvaryingly courteous manner. In 1938 he had published his memoir of the life of a submariner in action, *One Man Band*, and wrote a number of press articles about his exploits.

He is survived by a son and a daughter, the wives of each of his two marriages having predeceased him.

SIR JEFFREY BENSON

Sir Jeffrey Benson, former chief executive and deputy chairman of the National Westminster Bank, died on November 13 aged 72. He was born on July 15, 1922.



JEFF BENSON began his career as a junior clerk. He stoked the boiler, stuck on the stamps and made the tea — while he dreamed of one day becoming a bank manager. The height of his ambition was to manage the National Provincial branch in Piccadilly — where indeed he was to become the manager's clerk. Strictly speaking, as he wryly recalled, he never made it.

But three decades after taking his first step on the ladder, he was to play a key role in the highly successful merger between the National Provincial, the District Bank and the Westminster to create the now familiar NatWest. Through diligent application and hard work, he leap-frogged over those contemporaries ahead of him to reach the highest rung of his profession.

His origins had been relatively humble. Born at Bramley, near Leeds, the son of a grocery manager, William Jeffrey Benson won a scholarship to West Leeds High School, which he left to start work in the National Provincial branch at Mahby, Yorkshire. The year was 1939 and two years later his career was interrupted almost as soon as it had begun by the overriding demands of war.

He volunteered to join the RAF because, he said, his mother had liked the colour of the uniform. Trained as a flight controller he served in North Africa and Italy, becoming a sergeant and being mentioned in dispatches. He always said that this was for ferrying cricket bats from Britain for the troops.

Demobilised in 1946, Benson returned to the bank where he soon found himself in "the advance division", a section of bright young men who were being groomed for high office in the National Provincial. By the time of the 1968-70 merger which created the modern NatWest, the junior clerk had become an assistant general manager.

As the result of a study of the new management structure required, Benson was chosen as the National Westminster's first regional executive director. From his new base at Bristol he was given command of the South West, as part of an organisational pilot project. The "pilots", as they came to be known, still meet annually for a reunion, presided over until now by their "chief pilot" Jeffrey Benson.

The experiment's success led to his being moved north to take charge in Manchester for a short while, before he was promoted general manager of the NatWest's management services division, with responsibility for everything from catering to computers. He was made a national director and deputy chief executive in 1975, then group chief executive three years later. Retiring from this in 1982 at the age of 60, he became a non-executive deputy chairman.

He was also on the bank's American board, which involved regular transatlantic commuting. At one time he was flying to the United States every month and by the time he left the bank altogether in 1987 he had chalked up as many as 99 flights on Concorde.

Benson also served as chairman of the Export Guarantees Advisory Council between 1982 and 1987, a government, part-time appointment which earned him his knighthood. Between 1983 and 1985 he was also president of the Institute of Bankers.

In 1983, a year after stepping down as chief executive of NatWest, he had been invited to join the board of the 600 Group, a group of engineering companies. He became vice-chairman in 1985, then chairman in 1987 — at a time when hard-pressed engineering firms were in need of strong financial leadership. He fully retired two years ago when he first became ill with cancer. A tall, reserved man with an imposing presence, Jeff Benson had been an active sportsman in his younger days, playing rugby until he was 38 and turning out as a prop forward for the bank's first XV. He was also a motorist and motorcycling enthusiast and in later years owned a motor cruiser on the Thames. He was appointed a Knight of the Order of St John.

He is survived by his wife Audrey, whom he first met as a pen friend during the war when she was serving in the WRNS, and by their two sons.

DR KATHERINE ELLIOTT

Dr Katherine Elliott, paediatrician and advocate for primary health care in developing countries, died in London on November 12 aged 75. She was born on May 28, 1919.

KATHERINE ELLIOTT was among the first in her profession to acknowledge publicly that a conventional approach to health care could not hope to meet the vast health needs of the developing world.

Choosing not to work in a formal medical setting herself, she used her position as assistant director of the Ciba Foundation, and later founder of the Appropriate Health Resources and Technologies Action Group (AHTAG), to promote innovative approaches to community health care in developing countries.

Born in Lincoln, Katherine May Blacklock was the daughter of Charles Blacklock, the director of a local engineering company, and was

educated at the London School of Medicine for Women and the Royal Free Hospital. She was a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians of London, and a member of the faculty of community medicine of the Royal College of Physicians.

During the Second World War she was a captain in the Indian Medical Service. She was a fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, and a fellow and member of the council of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine. In 1981 she was elected as an honorary member of the British Paediatric Association.

Elliott's skills as a communicator came into their own during her time at the Ciba Foundation. Between 1966 and 1981 she organised and edited 32 symposia broadening the traditional scientific research agenda of the foundation. For example, the 1973 seminar, "Human Rights in Health",



called for five fundamental rights for all mankind: safe water, adequate nutrition, protection against infectious disease, access to the means for controlling fertility and "within reach, at least some form of healthcare".

The growing recognition during the early 1970s of the key role of health in development convinced her that an organisation needed to be set

up to address these issues. She was already a founder member of E.F. Schumacher's Intermediate Technology Development Group, whose rural health panel had done much to promote new approaches to health care in developing countries.

In 1971 the World Health Organisation (WHO) set up an Appropriate Technology for Health Programme and turned to Katherine Elliott to provide the focus for a WHO Collaborating Centre. The centre would promote the training and use of health auxiliaries, and alternative approaches to high-cost hospital based care. AHTAG was set up to fulfil this role.

Katherine Elliott was the original networker. One of her greatest contributions to AHTAG's work was her vast range of contacts worldwide, which could be linked up to further the development of primary health care. Colleagues will remember with affection those informal gath-

erings around her kitchen table, where the exchange of ideas often led to significant new projects.

A prolific writer whose publications reached a wide audience, Katherine Elliott was a member of the UK committee to the WHO and an adviser to the former director-general, Halfdan Mahler. She was frequent consultant for WHO and other international organisations all over the developing world. She retained a particular affection for the Indian sub-continent, and during consultations there she liked nothing better than to escape high-level meetings and revisit rural health projects in which she had been involved.

Visited by her many friends, young and old alike, Katherine Elliott retained her wit and intellectual vigour throughout her last illness. On the receiving end of medical care herself, she was particularly keen to discuss ways in which doctor-patient communications could be improved. She felt that medical students should be taught far more about communication skills, and was pleased that this had at last been recognised by the General Medical Council in their 1993 publication *Tomorrow's Doctors*.

She married Alan Manton Elliott in September 1945. They divorced in 1969. Her gift for communication has been passed on to her three children — Tony, founder of the Time Out Group, Veronica, a health consultant in Washington, and Rose, a textile fashion designer.

PROFESSOR DAVID JONES

David Jones, Professor of History at the University College, Swansea, died of cancer on October 30 aged 53. He was born in Montgomeryshire on June 12, 1941.

DAVID JONES's death cut short an historian who was arriving at the peak of his powers. Although his output of books and articles was already formidable, there was more — much more — that remained unharvested. He had been awarded a British Academy/Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowship in the teeth of extremely fierce competition as recently as 1992, and had spent the session, 1993-94, working with his customary systematic diligence on the South Wales Police and crime in the 19th and 20th centuries.

That last year was typical of his whole career, which was characterised by intense hard, immaculately organised work — meticulously seeking out sources in a whole range of repositories, probable and improbable, rigorously testing his material, and presenting his conclusions in smooth, readable prose.

He once described his mentor, David Williams, as one of the "most thorough and elegant" of historians. Those words might with equal validity have been applied to him: except that there ran through him a hidden but fiery streak of what he called his "Celtic enthusiasm", which was denied to the more cautious Williams. Not for nothing had

David Jones come under the influence of Richard Cobb and Gwyn Alfried Williams.

David Jones was one of seven children of an agricultural labourer and his wife. He retained throughout his life the countryman's thoughtful, deliberate manner of speech, and an attractive borderland accent. He was educated at Welshpool High School. Tall, well-built and handsome, he was an accomplished athlete and a skilful artist. In 1959 he entered the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, where he graduated with upper second class honours in history in 1962. Irresistibly attracted then, and subsequently, to social history, he was awarded a PhD in 1966 for a thesis on "Popular Disturbances in Wales, 1792-1832", for which he had studied under the supervision of David Williams.

After a year's school-teaching, he joined the history department at the University College, Swansea, and stayed there for the rest of his career. He was elected FRHistS in 1975, promoted senior lecturer in 1976, Reader in 1986, and awarded a personal Chair in 1990. He was a highly effective teacher, whose courses were deservedly oversubscribed by undergraduates. He was a loyal, modest, essentially private man, with whom few could claim to be intimate, but for whom all his colleagues had esteem and liking.

During his 28 years in academia, he blossomed prodigiously as an historical writer. Between 1973 and 1992 he published six substantial

books and a wealth of articles and reviews: *Before Rebecca* (1973); *Charism and the Chartist* (1975); *Crime, Protest, Community and the Police in 19th Century Britain* (1982); *The Last Rising* (1983); *Rebecca's Children* (1989); and *Crime in 19th Century Wales* (1992). He was always intensely drawn to the unusual annals of the poor and down-trodden. Over the course of the years, his vision as a "people's remembrancer" became increasingly more comprehensive and masterly.

A countryman who had moved to the industrial south, he was particularly well fitted to penetrate and interpret that transitional mentality which pervaded so much of the radical protest of 19th-century Wales in town and country. Beneath his calm and unfurrowed exterior, there burned a passionate desire for decency and justice and a generosity of spirit which were nevertheless not allowed to distort or bend that impeccable integrity which he cherished for historical truth. He aspired to write a novel one day; and with his gifts of insight and empathy he might well have written a memorable one.

His last months forced him to draw on all his deep resources of character and inner strength. He faced the prospect of a desperately serious operation for cancer with courage and equanimity. He is survived by his wife Gwendolyn, to whom he had been happily married for more than twenty years, and a son.

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FICKLENESS OF FROST

The beauty of frost is greater perhaps in England than in any other country, because it is apt to be so transient and because it is often not accompanied by snow. Frost does not work much change upon a snow-covered world. It may leave its delicate patterns on the window panes and decorate the ice with crystals, but elsewhere we have to look closely for the marks of its "silent ministry." It transforms the whole earth only where there is a great variety of colour and surface for it to work upon. There is a monotonous and almost wearisome brilliance in snow-covered landscape when the sky is cloudless and the sun shines brightly, especially when, as in Switzerland, the atmosphere is so clear that distance and foreground are equally sharp in outline and colour. Then the whole world seems to be dead and embalmed. Time and space alike appear to be frozen into an equal monotony, as if the earth were a derelict like the moon, forgotten by all the life of

ON THIS DAY
November 25 1910

Frost seldom gets a good press, being generally associated with nipped buds and burst pipes, but there is another side to it.

But our frosts come and go like all the moods of life. We wake in the morning to find the world all glittering as if it had given up its work and put on a holiday dress but the very brightness of the sun seems to call it back to work. On the southern slopes of the hills the bloom of frost passes through wonderful changes and disappears. In the woods the branches stir as their white fringes fall off them. Everywhere there are phases of delicate and transient beauty, until by the afternoon very likely

it is an ordinary winter's day again. We are apt to complain of the fickleness of our climate in winter as well as in summer; and we talk of the good old-fashioned winters as if we wanted them back again. But most of us probably have so pleasant a memory of frosts just because they are usually so fleeting, because we think of them as morning surprises and have in our minds the beauty of their gradual yielding to the sun. When frost keeps its predominance all through the day, and day after day, the earth itself seems to grow weary of it, and even evergreen trees begin to look as if they were dead. This gives way to a universal aspect of age, with hard wrinkles and bleached colours everywhere. If then the sky clouds over and with the continuing drought the hoar frost turns to black, we have the ugliest weather of the whole year — uglier even than the east winds of March, and far uglier than the drizzle of November; for it is an ugliness that seems to give no hope of change and settles down upon the earth like death.

NEWS

Right supports 'suicide pact'

John Major's authority looked increasingly damaged as rightwing Cabinet ministers were asked to issue loyalty pledges and a backbencher told him that he would rather lose the whip than support the European Finance Bill.

As a mood of crisis gripped the party, the Prime Minister signed up the full Cabinet to the so called "suicide pact" to go down together if they lost on Monday. Pages 1, 2, 10, 11

Fox beats off his pursuers

Sir Marcus Fox beat off a challenge by Sir Nicholas Bonsor for the chairmanship of the 1922 Committee, giving the Prime Minister a breathing space. Sir Marcus had been attacked as John Major's "messenger boy" and Tory MPs judged that his victory had helped to shore up the Prime Minister's position. Page 1

Nurse suspended

A second nurse has been suspended over irregularities in the treatment of intensive care patients. The "errors" were discovered at the cardiac unit of a Sheffield hospital. Page 3

US plan blocked

Nato blocked an American plan to save the Muslim Bosnian town of Bihac from falling into Serb hands, and sent the plan to the UN. Pages 1, 13

Railtrack sale

The Government smoothed the path for the Chancellor to search for tax cuts with an announcement that Railtrack is to be sold off within the lifetime of this parliament. Page 5

Bulger decision row

A leading children's lawyer criticised the decision of Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, that the children who murdered James Bulger should be locked up for at least 15 years. Page 6

Computer error

A silicon chip used in millions of computers and promoted heavily in TV advertisements has a fault that can cause it to produce inaccurate results in mathematical calculations. Page 8

Jail shopping ban

Prison staff in England and Wales have been ordered to stop shopping for food, toiletries and luxuries for inmates. Page 8

Royal numbers copied by BT worker

Britain's intelligence services were reeling from the disclosure that their secret computerised systems have been breached. An inquiry into how a temporary employee of British Telecom gained access to files on the Royal Family, the intelligence community and the Prime Minister, is to be launched by the data protection watchdog. Pages 1, 7

Accident battles

Accident victims are being forced to fight for their compensation in the "do-it-yourself" small claims court without lawyers. Page 9

Vaccine overdose

More than 800 new-born babies were given five times the normal dose of a tuberculosis vaccine because of a hospital error, Manchester health officials said. Page 10

Backing for Helms

Robert Dole, who will be the Senate's Republican leader from January, is to proceed with Jesse Helms's appointment as chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee. Page 16

Berlusconi revelation

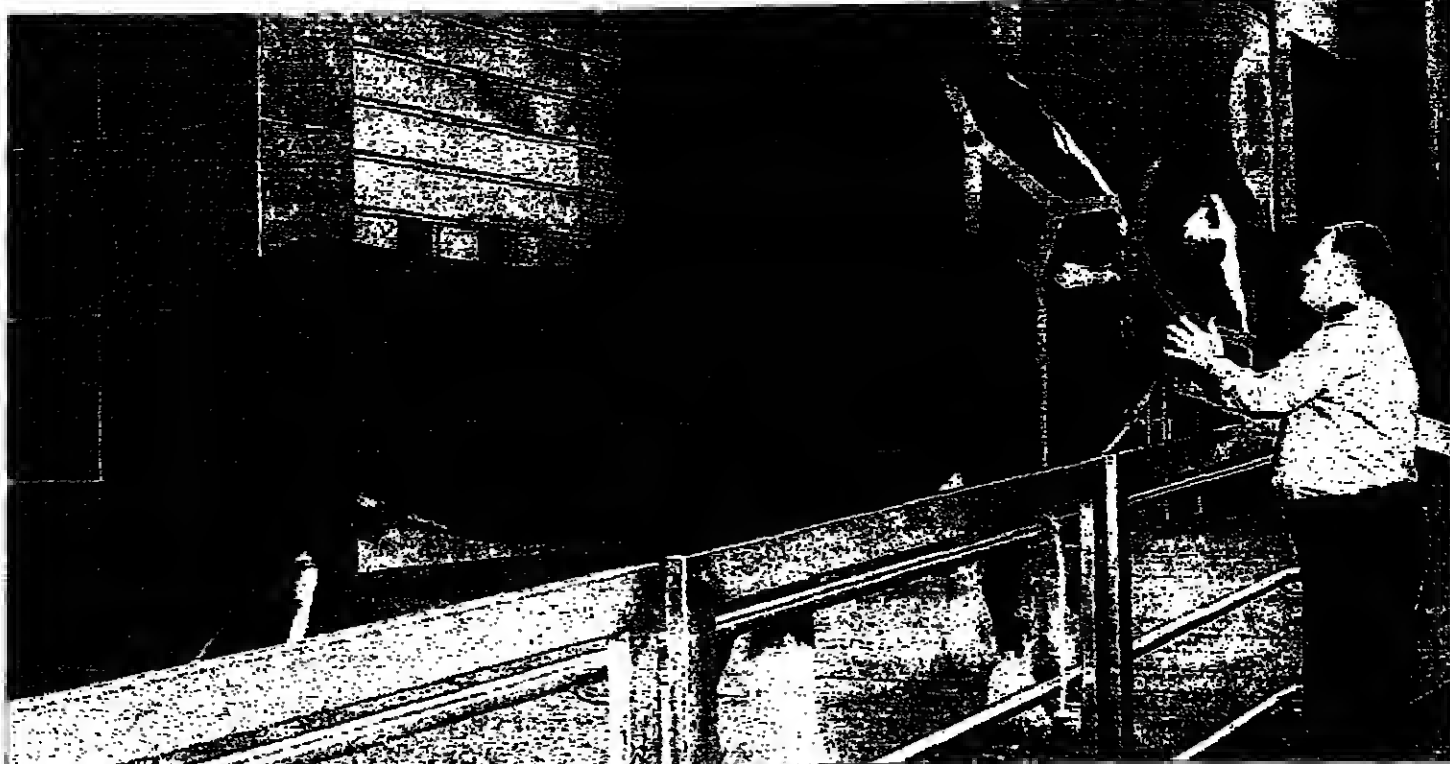
Fresh evidence that Silvio Berlusconi was involved in corruption emerged as magistrates examined a bank account allegedly used by him to bribe tax inspectors. Page 14

Tanzania scandal

More than 60 per cent of all foreign aid to Tanzania has been frozen after allegations that import taxes worth millions of pounds have been lost to smuggling. Page 15

Korean atrocity

A North Korean defector to the South said that pregnant wives of political prisoners were executed in public to end the bloodlines of dissidents. Page 17



Two shire horses appeared at a Glasgow Court when a farmer claimed they were his witnesses in a case over straying animals. Page 3

BUSINESS

Economy: A further increase in the number of factories planning to raise prices emerged from the CBI, strengthening the chances for another rise in interest rates to guard against inflation. Page 25

Storehouse: The group, is increasing its interim dividend for the first time in seven years after more than doubling profits. Page 25

No Bonus: Peter Wood, the chief executive of Direct Line Insurance, will not receive a bonus even though the company which he founded in 1984 has doubled profits to £110.1 million. Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 rose 9.1 to 3036.6. Sterling's index fell from 79.9 to 79.6 after a fall from \$1.5703 to \$1.5618 and from DM2.4398 to DM2.4341. Page 28

SPORT

Cricket: Forty-four years ago in Brisbane, where England and Australia are meeting in the first Test, 20 wickets fell in a single day on a drying pitch. Page 44

Football: Manchester United are still reeling from their defeat in Gothenburg, which is expected to cost the club £7 million in lost revenue. Page 48

Hockey: A goal by Nick Thompson six minutes from time spared England's blushes in the World Cup match against Belarusia, a nation with only 250 registered players. Page 46

Rugby union: Francois Pienaar, captain of the South African touring team, says that players' views should be canvassed when rule-changes are planned. Page 42

FEATURES

Wear's mistress: Valerie Grove with the widow prevented from marrying her twice-divorced priest. Page 18

Naked art: Joanna Pitman visits the Turner sculptor and discovers the link between clingfilm and his iron dolls. Page 19

Day job: Libby Purves on why all television bosses should be shut in a room with only daytime TV for company. Page 18

On line to God: Why go to church when you can get absolution via the Internet? Page 33

Putting a "you" in guru: Do you have what it takes to become a computer whizz? Page 34

Out of the East: Out of the Blue, an earnest Japanese musical about peace and reconciliation has arrived in the West End, with a message of goodwill from the Mayor of Nagasaki. Page 57

Stepping in: A contemporary dance troupe made its debut: The Richard Alston Company grew out of the defunct London Contemporary Dance. Page 57

Vietnamese whirr: The Vienna Philharmonic returned to London with James Levine conducting. Page 37

Pop on Friday: Sheryl Crow bemoans the curse of being pretty; Prince finally releases his *Black Album*; and Cyndi Lauper impresses in concert. Pages 39, 40

Western European governments are expected to set a date to open up nearly all their internal borders but, at present, they seem unable to find the political will to set up an effective Union-wide police system. These decisions owe everything to political horse-trading. Page 2

Yasser Arafat's police must become more aggressive against terrorism and less aggressive against political dissent. The New York Times. Whatever the merits or demerits of the European Finance Bill, Mr Major has not in any way acted either improperly or in breach of tradition. Evening Standard

Rear-Admiral Ben Bryant, wartime submarine commander and Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel, 1954-57; Sir Jeffrey Benson, former chief executive and deputy chairman of NatWest; Dr Katherine Elliott, paediatrician and health care expert; David Jones, history professor. Page 23

Conservative Party divisions: the future of the Falklands; image of medieval monks. Page 21



TOMORROW

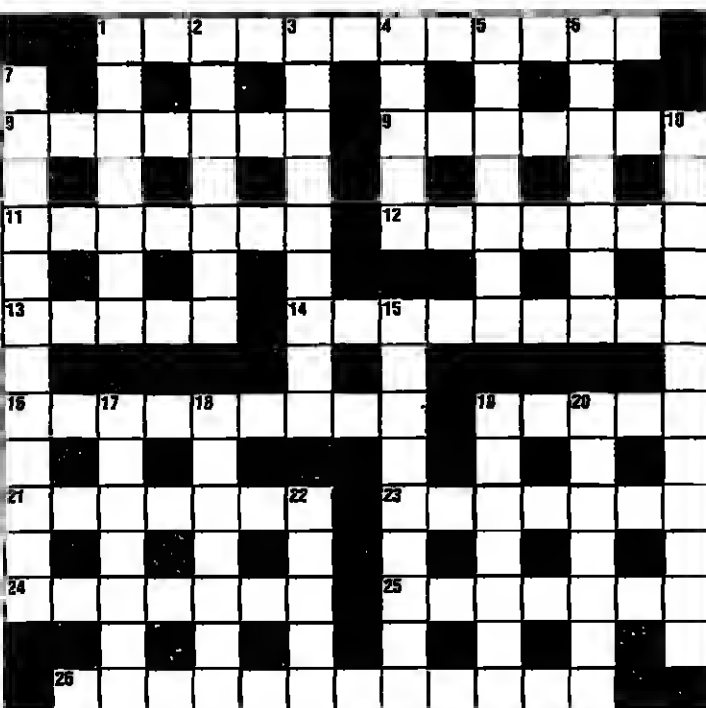
IN THE TIMES

RED ALERT
Robert Crampton meets Chris Evans (left), the future face of British television

REVIEWS

Jonathan Meades on home-cooking in Poole, John Diamond on P.J. O'Rourke

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,709



- ACROSS**
- Detailing its role in the nursery rhyme (7,5).
 - Listener needs this protection from bungler on the organ (3-4).
 - Call again about the ownership (7).
 - Holy king retains ace explorer (7).
 - She succeeded as Catherine Slopier (7).
 - Places in speech for quotes (5).
 - In a river without a costume? One will get a letter (9).
 - Device to blow up a satrap (9).
 - Very musical (5).
 - Materials used in the interior of brakes (7).
 - Porridge-maker has nothing at breakfast, say (7).
 - Harangue Alice wrongly dividing foreign currency (7).
- DOWN**
- Language derived from a Latin one (7).
 - It is not to be fed during one's stay (7-5).
 - Garage open all night (7).
 - Ways out of the Russian capital for special planes (7).
 - Insect working well in the grass (9).
 - Belly-band needs loosening to be right (5).
 - Paul Revere's feat reported in the compound (7).
 - Ties where restraint is called for (7).
 - Wearing glasses for a show when retired (12).
 - Flower girl in finale appears briefly in South Pacific (6,6).
 - In natural religion, recognise absolute rule (9).
 - A canape is enough to make you feel good (7).
 - Made off with bag for loot (7).
 - Run in a race and pretend to win (7).
 - An egg that's run looks more sickly (7).
 - Nokomis, upset, forsakes Oklahoma for a penniless lad (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 19,708



Times Two Crossword, page 48

TIMES WEATHERCALL

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0831 500 followed by the appropriate code.

Greater London	701
East of London	702
West of London	703
North of London	704
South of London	705
East of Kent	706
West of Kent	707
North of Kent	708
South of Kent	709
East of Essex	710
West of Essex	711
North of Essex	712
South of Essex	713
East of Suffolk	714
West of Suffolk	715
North of Suffolk	716
South of Suffolk	717
East of Norfolk	718
West of Norfolk	719
North of Norfolk	720
South of Norfolk	721
East of Cambridgeshire	722
West of Cambridgeshire	723
North of Cambridgeshire	724
South of Cambridgeshire	725
East of Lincolnshire	726
West of Lincolnshire	727
North of Lincolnshire	728
South of Lincolnshire	729

Weathercall is charged at 33p per minute (cheap rate) and 49p per minute at all other times.

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic and roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0336 401 followed by the appropriate code.

London & SE traffic, roadworks	731
Area within M25	732
East of M25 (Bucks/Bucks/Essex)	733
West of M25 (Essex/Herts)	734
North of M25 (Herts/Beds)	735
South of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	736
East of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	737
West of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	738
North of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	739
South of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	740
East of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	741
West of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	742
North of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	743
South of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	744
East of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	745
West of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	746
North of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	747
South of M25 (Essex/Suffolk)	748

AA Roadwatch is charged at 33p per minute (cheap rate) and 49p per minute at all other times.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Wednesday: Highest day temp: Kinross, Moray 16th; Lowest day temp: Stirling, Perth 10th; Highest night temp: Stirling, Perth 10th; Lowest night temp: Stirling, Perth 10th.

HOW THE WEST HAS WON

Taunton-based Western President was voted best for customer service in a broker survey of leading health insurers.

OWPA

Ring WPA Direct FREECALL 0400 41 42 43

FORECAST

General: England and Wales will be mostly cloudy with outbreaks of drizzly rain, especially in western regions and over high ground. Scotland and Northern Ireland will also be rather cloudy, with some more persistent rain.

The mild weather in southern parts of the country will continue, but further north temperatures will be close to the seasonal normal, with a touch of frost in sheltered highland glens.

London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, E England: any early fog should clear, but staying cloudy with outbreaks of drizzly rain. Wind southwesterly light to moderate. Max 13C (55F).

W Midlands, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Central N, NE England: any drizzle or rain clearing, but staying

AROUND BRITAIN

24 hrs to 5 pm	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th	21st	22nd	23rd	24th	25th	26th	27th	28th	29th	30th	31st	
	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun	Run	Gun
Aberdeen	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	
Anglesey	10	13	16	19	22	25	28	31	34	37	40	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	
Armagh	11	14	17	20	23	26	29	32	35	38	41	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	
Aspen	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	
Belfast	13	16	19	22	25	28	31	34	37	40	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	
Birmingham	14	17	20	23	26	29	32	35	38	41	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	
Blackburn	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	
Bristol	16	19	22	25	28	31	34	37	40	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	
Cardiff	17	20	23	26	29	32	35	38	41	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	
Carmarthen	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	
Casson	19	22	25	28	31	34	37	40	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	
Cheshire	20	23	26	29	32	35	38	41	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	
Cheshire	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	
Doncaster	22	25	28	31	34	37	40	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	
Durham	23	26	29	32	35	38	41	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	
Edinburgh	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	
Essex	25	28	31	34	37	40	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	
Essex	26	29	32	35	38	41	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	116	
Farnham	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	117	
Farnham	28	31	34	37	40	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	118	
Farnham	29	32	35	38	41	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	116	119	
Farnham	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	117	120	
Farnham	31	34	37	40	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	118	121	
Farnham	32	35	38	41	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	116	119	122	
Farnham	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	117	120	123	
Farnham	34	37	40	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	118	121	124	
Farnham	35	38	41	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	116	119	122	125	
Farnham	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	117	120	123	126	
Farnham	37	40	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	118	121	124	127	
Farnham	38	41	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	116	119	122	125	128	
Farnham	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	117	120	123	126	129	
Farnham	40	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	118	121	124	127	130	
Farnham	41	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	116	119	122	125	128	131	
Farnham	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	117	120	123	126	129	132	
Farnham	43	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	118	121	124	127	130	133	
Farnham	44	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	116	119	122	125	128	131	134	
Farnham	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	117	120	123	126	129	132	135	
Farnham	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	118	121	124	127	130	133	136	
Farnham	47	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	116	119	122	125	128	131	134	137	
Farnham	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	117	120	123	126	129	132	135	138	
Farnham	49	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	118	121	124	127	130	133	136	139	
Farnham	50	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	116	119	122	125	128	131	134	137	140	
Farnham	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	117	120	123	126	129	132	135	138	141	
Farnham	52	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	118	121	124	127	130	133	136	139	142	
Farnham	53	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	116	119	122	125	128	131	134	137	140	143	
Farnham	54	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	117	120	123	126	129	132	135	138	141	144	
Farnham	55	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	118	121	124	127	130	133	136	139	142	145	
Farnham	56	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95	98	101	104	107	110	113	116	119	122	125	128	131	134	137	140	143	146	
Farnham	57	60	63	66	69	72	75	78	81	84	87	90	93	96	99	102	105	108	111	114	117	120	123	126	129	132	135	138	141	144	147	
Farnham	58	61	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97	100	103	106	109	112	115	118	121	124	127	130	133	136	139	142	145	148	
Farnham	59	62	65	68	71	74	77	80	83	86	89	92	95																			



INFOTECH 33-35

Will DNA molecules run computers of the future?



ARTS 37-40

Deaf ears and vivid dreams in Harold Pinter's Landscape



SPORT 42-48

Len Hutton and the last of the sticky dogs

COURT BOOSTS RACE ATTACK SENTENCES
Pages 41

THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 25 1994

CBI expects half-point rates rise

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

BUSINESS leaders today forecast a half-point increase in interest rates, early next year as their concern mounts over the inflationary threat of rising raw material prices. They say any government tax cuts would threaten to push up base rates and inflation. Although the latest monthly industrial trends from the Confederation of British Industry report exports at their best levels for six years, ministers are likely to find uncomfortable many of the findings of the last major set of economic figures before next week's Budget. While making a "very positive" forecast of continuing economic growth, CBI leaders say it assumes a half-point rise

in base rates in the first three months of next year as part of a "relatively modest" tightening of monetary policy amounting to rate rises of 1.75 per cent in all by the end of 1996. Kate Barker, the CBI's chief economic adviser, says that business supports the Government's aim of keeping inflation in the lower half of its target range of 1-4 per cent, and if a rise in interest rates were necessary for that target to be met, business would support it. The CBI's survey shows price pressure continuing to increase as companies struggle with higher raw material prices. The balance of the 1,300 companies surveyed earlier this month — those report-

Small beer factor behind rise at Allied Domecq

By Martin Waller, Deputy City Editor

SHARES in Allied Domecq, the renamed Allied-Lyons spirits, beer and food group, plunged yesterday after lacklustre interim figures emphasised difficulties in the international drinks business. Pre-tax profits were £310 million in the 28 weeks to September 17, a 16 per cent headline rise from £266 million last time. However, both turnover and operating profit from continuing operations were flat, the latter rising by just £4 million to £249 million. After including the Domecq Spanish drinks business acquired during the half year, trading profits improved by just £1 million to £388 million. The interim dividend is 7.75p, an effective increase of 6.2 per cent, payable on February 24 out of normalised earnings per share, up 4.1 per cent to 17.8p. Michael Jackaman, the chairman, said the first figure from Domecq were hit by "short-term turbulence" in the Mexican economy, with volumes down 5 per cent. This was balanced by a 13 per cent volume rise in Spain, but pre-tax profits from Domecq as taken into Allied's accounts still fell by £8 million to £15 million. Although trading profits had been flat across the group, a better second-half performance could be expected after the seasonal Christmas pick-up from Domecq and the benefits of high marketing spending on Allied's Hiram Walker drinks portfolio, Mr Jackaman said. The shares, however, plunged 19p to 555p. Allied's joint brewing venture in the UK with the Dances, Carlsberg-Tetley, was a continuing drag on performance, with trading profits falling by £5 million to £50 million, hit by the shift to production for the lower-margin take-home market. Mr Jackaman said the prospect for brewing was stability rather than strong growth, although the group remained "very committed" to the partnership. *Tempus, page 28*

Nadir repayment disputed

By Jon Ashworth

ASIL Nadir's status in northern Cyprus was in fresh doubt yesterday amid reports that he had agreed to repay up to \$15 million in overdue tax and social security payments. Government sequestrators seized two hotels on the island this week in an attempt to recoup some of the outstanding funds. Mr Nadir, who spent two days in talks with Hilde Aron, prime minister of the disputed territory, is reported to have agreed to a

repayment programme. This could lead to the release of the Jasmine Court and Palm Beach hotels. Talk of an agreement was disputed by the territory's attorney-general and the tourism ministry, which is owed rent. They are said to have refused to accept the repayment plan. The status of the hotels is unclear, although they continue to trade. The hotels are among several investments on the island technically owned by Polly Peck International creditors, but remaining under Mr Nadir's control. Creditors could receive their first payout next year, it was announced yesterday. Chris Barlow, lead administrator at Coopers & Lybrand, said approval had been given in principle for a distribution deal that would unlock more than \$200 million in funds. *Legal saga, page 29*

Direct Line rings up doubled profit of £110m

By Robert Miller

PETER Wood, chief executive of Direct Line Insurance, will not be too unhappy that he received no bonus this year even though the company, which he founded in 1984, announced more than doubled annual profits of £110.1 million. Mr Wood, whose previous salary arrangements were linked to company performance, yesterday warned the market not to expect similar growth this financial year. He said: "The company's growth is continuing, although it is seeing increased competition in the market, which may have the effect of slowing profit growth next year." Direct Line, which is owned by the Royal Bank of Scotland and is Britain's

largest-ever private motor insurance company, paid Mr Wood £21.4 million in the year to September 30 as the final instalment of a £42 million package agreed last year. He now earns a straightforward salary of £30,000, uprated each year in line with inflation. Direct Line's exceptional growth has spawned several imitators — hence the warning about increased competition. Direct Line has 1.9 million motor policies in force against 1.25 million previously, and has written £22,000 household insurance policies (£73,000). Gross premiums received during the year were £608.2 million (£409.5 million). Direct Line's assets rose by £278.4 million to £865.4 million. During the year, RBS injected £35 million of capital to support the



Overhead line: Julia Wasmuth, a Railtrack employee, abseils in London's Broadgate to raise money for charity. The Government announced Railtrack would be sold off on the stock market "within the lifetime of this Parliament". (Report 2, Pennington 27; feature 29)

SIB to look into KW complaints

By Liz Dolan

THE Securities and Investments Board (SIB) has bowed to pressure from an investors' action group, consumer bodies, the press, and MPs to investigate a flood of complaints from customers of Knight Williams, the retirement advice specialist. After discussions with the Knight Williams Investors Action Group, the SIB has taken the unusual step of setting up a complaints procedure specifically for Knight Williams. The move is seen as a tacit criticism of the original handling of customers' complaints, both by the firm and its regulator, the Financial Intermediaries Managers and Brokers Regulatory Association (Fimbra). An all-party group of MPs tabled an early day motion in the Commons in July after a large number of complaints from constituents about KW. Fimbra fined the firm £50,000 in September for breaching ten of its rules, including using

misleading advertisements. While complainants will still be encouraged to submit, or resubmit, complaints directly to KW, the SIB now offers them the alternatives of submitting complaints to itself, or to Ernst & Whinney, the accountant that has agreed to monitor the process as an independent observer. Decisions will be based on three main considerations: whether Knight Williams broke Fimbra rules in the course of advising or making recommendations; whether clients suffered a loss; and whether the loss was the result of a breach of the rules. It is unclear just how many complaints have been received by the various bodies involved, but the action group alone has logged 1,500 letters and telephone calls. KW said that it had been frustrated by the failure of most members of the action group to bring complaints to the firm.

BhS lifts group with 6% sales rise

By Susan Gilchrist

STOREHOUSE, the BhS 10 Mothercare group, is increasing its interim dividend for the first time in seven years after more than doubling profits in the first half. The group, which has recovered strongly in recent years, is lifting the interim dividend to 2.7p from 2.5p. This follows the increased payout at the end of last year, which was the first rise in the final dividend since 1989. Shareholders will be paid on February 9. Storehouse made pre-tax profits of £24.2 million in the 28 weeks to October 28, up from £11.6 million in the corresponding period last year. Excluding exceptional charges in the previous year, underlying profits from retail operations rose by a third to £22.8 million from £17.1 million. Earnings per share jumped to 3.9p from 1.4p. Sales, profits and margins improved across all the group's retail chains. BhS lifted sales by 6 per cent with operating profits rising by 22 per cent. Keith Edelman, Storehouse's chief executive, said the chain benefited from a television advertising campaign, launched in August, which is part of a strategy to build the BhS brand. Mothercare increased sales by 10 per cent while operating profits doubled. Mr Edelman said the results reflected the success of the new store format, which emphasises higher margin clothing ranges rather than equipment such as prams and cots. A third of Mothercare's trading space has been converted to the new format. The group plans to open at least 20 BhS stores over the next three years, taking the number of outlets to almost 150. Six stores are due to open next year and a new format is being tested in Cambridge. *Tempus, page 28*

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES	
FT-SE 100	3038.6 (+9.1)
Yield	4.22%
FT-SE All Share	1510.28 (+2.60)
Nikkei	16701.24 (+251.75)
New York	Closed
Dow Jones	
S&P Composite	
US RATE	
Federal Funds	Closed (5.75%)
Long Bond	
Yield	(7.95%)
LONDON MONEY	
3-mth Interbank	5.75% (5.75%)
Life long gilt	
future (Dec)	103.75 (103.75)
STERLING	
New York	Closed (1.5699)
London	
\$	1.5615 (1.5725)
DM	2.4333 (2.4358)
FF	8.3870 (8.3770)
Sfr	2.0637 (2.0670)
Yen	153.77 (154.50)
E index	79.6 (79.9)
DOLLAR	
London	Closed (1.5666)
DM	
FF	
Sfr	
Yen	
E index	
Tokyo close Yen 98.41	
NORTH SEA OIL	
Brnt 15-day (Feb)	\$17.00 (\$17.00)
GOLD	
London close	\$384.45 (\$385.05)
* denotes midday trading price	

Outclassed

Europe's top businessmen are calling on governments to use the "recovery dividend" to put public finances on a sound footing and invest in education and training. The European Round Table says the Continent is already economically outclassed by the US, Japan, and parts of Asia. *Page 26*

Bouncing back

Johnson Matthey, the precious metals and electronic materials group, bounced back from the collapse of its merger talks with Cookson by revealing a profits leap. *Page 27, Tempus 28*

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THE VALUE OF INVESTMENTS CAN FALL AS WELL AS RISE. TTES/11/94



Wood: competition warning

Pennington, page 27
Stock market, page 28

European business 'outclassed by the US'

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

A PANEL of Europe's top businessmen is calling on governments to use the "recovery dividend" to put public finances on a sound footing and to invest in education and training.

In a broad-ranging appeal for action to improve Europe's competitiveness, the European Round Table gave warning that the continent is already economically outclassed by the United States, Japan, and some of the Asian "tiger" economies.

The business agenda will have a strikingly right-wing resonance for many European states. But its proponents are 42 chairman and chief executives from Europe's largest companies, including David Simon, of BP, Edzard Reuter, of Daimler-Benz, Serge Tchuruk, of Total, and Giovanni Agnelli, of Fiat. Together, they command enormous influence in the political lobbies.

In a report on European competitiveness, published yesterday, business leaders complained that energy costs within the Union are 30 per cent higher than in the United States. Urgent action is needed to reduce energy costs, they said, yet the European Commission is poised to unveil proposals for a petrol tax after failing to secure backing for its carbon tax proposals.

Telecommunications cost up to 22 times as much as in America, the report claims, while competition and private sector capital are needed in Europe's rail and air travel systems to cut excessive costs.

The cost of capital in Europe, they say, is "consistently higher than in the United States and Japan". And taxation in Europe accounts for 40 per cent of gross domestic product, against 31

per cent in the America and 34 per cent in Japan.

The business leaders make no attempt to put a value on the benefits of higher social spending in Europe. But they say the structural weaknesses are inhibiting economic growth and reducing the continent's competitiveness.

Economic recovery, now underway, will generate resources which can be used to improve competitiveness, they say.

A legitimate use... would be to invest in better education to ensure that young people are genuinely equipped with the knowledge and skills to create future growth and wealth," they add.

They also want more support for small and medium-sized enterprises and deregulation to simplify the environment in which they operate.

The thrust of the proposals was echoed by Sir Michael Angus, the deputy president of the Confederation of British Industry. In a speech to industrialists in London, Sir Michael said British business remained committed to Europe, but sought a European Union with policies and institutions that recognise the realities of global competition. He called for a "revolution in attitudes" among legislators and officials throughout Europe.

Legislators in Brussels must abandon prescriptive legislation, and base their proposals on explicit analysis of costs and benefits, he said.

And he criticised the "twin evils of non-enforcement of Community legislation in other member states and over-zealous enforcement of Community legislation by the authorities in the United Kingdom."



Bill Rooney: back in the City only a year after being ousted from Spring Ram, and earlier than even he expected

Two of Six Wise Men to leave

THE Chancellor's Six Wise Men will continue to act as independent advisers to the Treasury but two of them will leave the panel this time next year (Janet Bush writes).

Professor David Currie, of the London Business School, and Professor Wynne Godley, of King's College, Cambridge, have had their contracts extended only until this time next year. Two new members will join the panel then.

Kenneth Clarke, praising the panel's work, said: "I believe that a steady turnover of membership will provide the best means of combining the benefits of continuity and change."

Rooney defies curse of the House of Atreus

By PHILIP PANGALOS

BILL Rooney, the former founder and head of Spring Ram who was ousted from his headquarters and kitchens group last year, is returning to the City. He will be hoping that the Greek legend associated with his latest venture does not return to haunt him.

He is heading a consortium that includes other former Spring Ram colleagues, to make a cash injection into Atreus, taking control of the struggling bathroom products group, which came to the market less than two years ago. Spring Ram crashed to losses of £36.4 million last year.

Mr Rooney may well consider a name change for

Atreus since in Greek legend Atreus was the king of Mycenae whose House was cursed and had a history shrouded by murder, cannibalism and corruption.

His latest investment group is subscribing for 18 million new shares at 10p and will also spend more than £3 million in taking an initial 32 per cent stake in Atreus, which specialises in shower screens and fittings. Mr Rooney's family interests are backing an open offer, on a one-for-two basis, also of 18 million shares at 10p, which could see the consortium raising its stake to 51.3 per cent. Atreus is also acquiring Samson Stairs, a

company run by Mr Rooney's consortium, for £200,000 in shares.

Atreus, which will be capitalised at about £10 million and have £7.6 million of cash, reported a pre-tax loss of £331,000 in the six months to September 30, against a profit of £551,000 previously. Mr Rooney, who replaces Charles Gillman as Atreus chairman, said: "We believe there is great potential to develop the Atreus product range, restore its profitability and look for suitable acquisitions in a growing market."

Atreus shares surged 4p to 13p, compared with the 1993 issue price of 20p.

De Beers gives up 50% of Namibian diamond assets

By COLIN CAMPBELL, MINING CORRESPONDENT

DE BEERS, in a landmark agreement with the government of Namibia, yesterday effectively "surrendered" a 50 per cent stake in its fabulously rich diamond concessions on- and off-shore Namibia that have been wholly owned by the company since 1919.

The accord, which was initiated by De Beers in 1990 and which comes in the wake of Namibia's independence, guarantees De Beers tenure and mining licenses over Namibian diamond deposits for at least 25 years, depending on the extent of reserves.

The imputed value of the assets that fall under De Beers' CDM banner (formerly Consolidated Diamond Mines of South West Africa), now being reconstituted into Namdeb Diamond Corporation, runs to several million dollars.

Namdeb will be 50/50 owned, there will be equal board representation, and the company has undertaken to adopt, in time, a fully autonomous management structure.

The operations include diamond deposits on the seabed 17 miles out to sea, and diamonds on the sand shores that are swept up not only by mechanical excavators but also by workers with brushes

and pans. Up to 479 million parts of waste have to be handled for one part of diamond.

The area, known as Diamond Area Number 1, or Sperrgebiet (the forbidden territory), was initially acquired from six German-owned mining companies by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer in 1919. Namibia produces 1.1 million carats a year, one third from offshore.

In value terms, Namibia is one of the world's richest diamond provinces. The financial and fiscal effects of the accord, which De Beers said demonstrates its ability to work with foreign governments, are backdated to January 1993. Namdeb will contract a five-year sales agreement for its entire diamond production with De Beers' Central Selling Organisation.

A diamond cutting and polishing factory in Namibia is under consideration. CDM is the biggest taxpayer, exporter and, outside the government, employer in Namibia with 4,600 people. Revenue from diamonds constitute 11 per cent of Namibia's GDP.

The parties said their combined efforts have significantly lessened the incidence of diamond theft and illicit diamond trading in the territory.

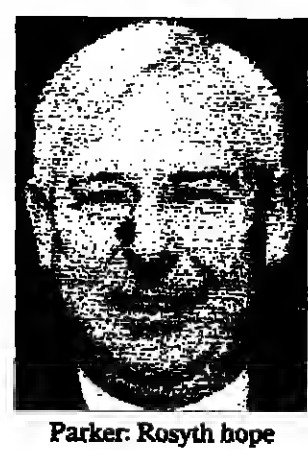
Babcock back in the black

By PHILIP PANGALOS

BABCOCK International group, the engineering contractor nursing itself back to health, has returned to the black at the interim stage, Dr John Parker, chairman, expects the improving trend to continue in the second half.

Cost controls, good cash flow and management efforts helped Babcock to a pre-tax profit of £2.83 million in the half year to September 30, against a loss of £9.18 million last time, on turnover of £349 million (£413 million). The group, which made a £78.6 million rights issue last year, lost £41.2 million in 1993.

Dr Parker said that the order book is "generally good", at £569 million on September 30, not including a £100 million reft of HMS Superb. However, restructuring the energy division, at a cost of £25 million, is proving "tough



Parker: Rosyth hope

and demanding". The division incurred further losses, of £6.85 million, restricting Babcock's profits growth.

Dr Parker says the energy division needs to cut 30 per cent of costs per head to be internationally competitive. "We will have achieved or bettered this by early next

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

German rate stability leaves markets quiet

THE financial markets had a quieter, more stable day, barely reacting to expected news that the Bundesbank had left German official interest rates unchanged. The Bundesbank's discount rate remains at 4.5 per cent and the Lombard rate at 6 per cent. The key repo money market rate was also left unchanged, at 4.85 per cent. This was expected after Hans Tietmeyer, Bundesbank president, said on Tuesday that no big change in the repo rate should be expected in the near future.

European stock markets ended with modest gains in quiet trading owing to the closure of US markets for Thanksgiving. European shares have largely moved in sympathy with Wall Street and there was little independent trade yesterday. The FT-SE 100 index, trading quietly before the Budget next Tuesday, closed 9.1 points higher at 3,036.6. The dollar edged up modestly in European trading.

Trade pact holds no fear

AMERICAN business believes that it has nothing to fear from a world trade pact, and that Congress will ratify the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade accord without difficulty. A survey of 105 US executives involved in international business showed that 85 per cent thought that "being the largest, most competitive and the most open economy in the world, the US industry has nothing to fear" from trade liberalisation, the Centre for Global Trade Development, an independent researcher, said.

OFT criticises delays

THE Office of Fair Trading is highly critical of delays in reporting large share transactions carried out by securities houses on the London stock market. Sir Bryan Carsberg, director-general of the OFT, said the delays, of 90 minutes for large trades and five days for very large trades, restricted and distorted competition. His comments were in a report to the Chancellor on the trade publication rules of the London Stock Exchange. He said delays meant that people executing smaller trades subsidised those executing larger trades.

Gao leaves Citic

GAO Kongliang, general manager of the Shanghai arm of China International Trust and Investment Corp (Citic), has departed. Citic Shanghai owes London metal brokers about \$40 million for copper futures deals. The bad debt, due since June, has fuelled Citic concern about state-controlled Chinese corporations' readiness, to meet commitments to Western firms. Citic gave no reason yesterday for Mr Gao's departure. The London Metals Exchange said that it had asked that the bad debt be paid "in full and without prejudice".

Telegraph staff options

THE Telegraph, whose proprietor, Conrad Black, announced his intention to buy back up to 6.8 million shares earlier this month, has put in place a generous staff share option scheme, the company's first for more than five years. Staff working for the publisher of the two Telegraph titles on September 1 or joining since have been granted options on shares at 367p, the market price at the time. So far a total of 1.29 million options have been granted. The company's shares jumped 8p to 354p yesterday.

Names' £12m war chest

LLOYD'S of London names have put aside £12 million for legal action aimed at securing compensation for losses. The Gooda Walker Action Group is to put up half the sum towards litigation in support of the £504 million judgment by the High Court in October. They also hope to beat attempts by Lloyd's to win access to the award. An appeal by agents against the damages is due in court next year. The Gooda Walker names also approved £6 million for action against Littlejohn Frazer, auditor of Gooda Walker syndicates, and others.

Lufthansa talks to SAS

LUFTHANSA, the German national carrier, is holding talks on a possible partnership with Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS), its arch-rival in the emerging aviation markets of central and eastern Europe. A Lufthansa spokesman said the two parties were exploring areas of co-operation. But he denied reports from Denmark that a deal was to be signed between the two carriers in next week. The German carrier has also held talks with Austrian Airlines and Swissair.

PhoneLink branches out

PHONELINK, a quoted electronic information services company, has joined forces with Cellnet, owned 60 per cent by British Telecommunications, to exploit the mobile data communications market. PhoneLink will connect its Tel-Me business services software and data centre with Cellnet's mobile network, allowing users to access Tel-Me by plugging a handset into a portable computer. Other services will emerge from the agreement, which is described as "strategic" and involves no equity exchange at this stage.

250 jobs at TSB centre

TSB is creating 250 jobs at a £15 million telephone banking centre in Glasgow, which will open next year. It follows the success of TSB's first centre in Newport, Gwent, which has handled more than 10,000 incoming customer calls in its first month. But job losses were announced yesterday by Scottish Widows, which is to shed 143 staff after restructuring the way it processes some types of new business, and by Thomas Cook, the travel group, which is axing 200 jobs, mainly among middle and senior managers.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

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LEGAL NOTICES

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CONSTRUCTION OF DEBATING HALL, CONFERENCE ROOMS AND OFFICES

AMENDMENT TO NOTICE OF OPEN INVITATION TO TENDER

FOR THE CONCRETE WORKS - STRUCTURAL STEELWORKS - ROOFING - WATERPROOFING

The date for the submission of tenders has been altered to the 13th December 1994 at 12.00 pm, at the address indicated below

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Quai WINTERER - 67080 STRASBOURG CEDEX Tel. 88 37 48 88 - Fax 88 37 48 99

CHARTERHOUSE
CONVEYANCERS LIMITED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Rule 4.105 of the Companies Act 1985 that a meeting of the shareholders of the above named company will be held at 11.15.00 am on 29th November 1994 at the offices of the company, 11, Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 3DF, to consider and, if thought fit, to pass the following resolutions: (1) That the company be and it be authorised to do so, to be wound up voluntarily in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act 1985 and to appoint the liquidator named in the resolution. (2) That the liquidator named in the resolution be and he be authorised to do so, to be the liquidator of the company. (3) That the liquidator named in the resolution be and he be authorised to do so, to be the liquidator of the company. (4) That the liquidator named in the resolution be and he be authorised to do so, to be the liquidator of the company. (5) That the liquidator named in the resolution be and he be authorised to do so, to be the liquidator of the company. 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□ Direct Line mortal, not busted □ BAe treads water over GEC guarantee □ Privatisation threatens higher subsidies

Seeing the Wood for the trees

THE Square Mile's critics were jubilant yesterday. Crowded into the wine bars around Throgmorton Street, they were chanting "Peter Wood is dead". If there is one thing the men in loud suits really hate, it is solid success. It leaves no opportunity to short the shares.

Yesterday's warning from Direct Line that its profit growth may slow because of rising pressure on rates in the motor insurance markets was, therefore, seized on as the first piece of evidence that Mr Wood, its founder, does not always walk on water. It has been apparent since the start of the year that the motor insurance market has passed its self-by date, largely because of Direct Line's aggressive marketing and pricing policies, which have forced other insurers to enter the direct writing market and to cut premium rates.

But before the world buries Mr Wood as another fly-by-night who came, soared and conked out, it is worth remembering some statistics about the business he has created. Direct Line may be the largest British motor insurer in history, but size and quality are largely unrelated in the financial services industry as the recent recession demonstrated.

What has driven Direct Line's

success is its low costs. Its expenses are still less than half the average of its rivals. So if motor insurance is due for a downturn, Direct Line has a much greater profit margin to cushion its fall.

Meanwhile, Mr Wood has been hedging his bets, just as his original business passes its zenith. Direct Line's household insurance business is still expanding to take up the slack. Mr Wood is also busily creating a new tele-sales phenomenon in the banking market, selling personal loans and mortgages while high street lenders are having difficulty finding willing customers. All this is risky.

Mr Wood is darting off in so many directions at once — loans, savings, Spanish insurance, even life and pensions next year — that these moves carry even more danger.

In fact, Mr Wood has made so much money for the Royal Bank that it is happy to let him do whatever he wants. If he fancied setting up Direct Line Green-grocers, selling cut-priced fruit and veg on a 24-hour phone line, Royal Bank's board would sim-

ply say: "Whatever you think, Pete, mine's a pineapple." Mr Wood has shown an uncanny knack of dodging the traditional pitfalls of insurance and banking since he founded Direct Line, based on the twin pillars of first-class computer systems and low costs. His solution to the problem of credit control is to allow insurance customers only to take out loans and mortgages. If people look after their cars and pay premiums promptly, they are far less likely to run off with someone else's money. Direct Line's admission that it is slowing down merely shows that it is mortal, not a busted flush.

Propellers within propellers

NEWS, as disclosed in *The Times*, that GEC has informed the Ministry of Defence that the company is prepared to guarantee the future of its Yarrow yard for at least seven years if it succeeds in its battle for control of VSEL, met with a diplomatic silence from BAe yesterday. The unofficial message eman-



ating from BAe's advisers was that it is not clear to what extent GEC's proposals would serve to underwrite current levels of employment on the Clyde. GEC intends to focus all frigate production at Yarrow but BAe appears sceptical. Will the focus be on shipbuilding, or maintenance? By way of sour grapes, how valid is a seven-year guarantee? Such was the unofficial flavour of BAe's response. That said, GEC's corridor power play, with a Yarrow guarantee placed on a platter before Malcolm Rifkind, Defence Secretary, looks rather smart, particularly in view of the fact that BAe was proclaiming, inside and outside the self-same corridors, that a GEC/VSEL amalgam would herald Yar-

row's closure. It can also be assumed that BAe's official reticence owes more than a little to sensitivities north of the border. Some 3,000 Yarrow jobs are at stake and attempts to deride a seven-year lifeline just might be misinterpreted, not only on the Clyde but also in Whitehall.

What neither party wants to do, particularly at this stage, is upset the mandarins. For it is they, representing the MoD, the DTI, the Treasury and the Scottish Office, who will gather on Monday to debate the VSEL affair and attempt to put forward a collective view to Sir Bryan Carsberg, Director-General of the OFT. Vibe have it that the MoD is not entirely unsympathetic to GEC's claim that the prospect of maintaining genuine competition between Barrow and Yarrow is unrealistic. The Scottish Office is reputed to be unsympathetic with the MoD's perspective, while the Treasury is thought to be a little more concerned about vanishing competition than about BAe's vanishing cash. Few vibes have been heard from the DTI, although Michael Heseltine's pref-

erence might well be to leave matters to market forces. Quite conceivably, Carsberg may be in line for a non-collective message.

Railtrack's faulty sums

PUSHING Railtrack into the private sector should bring operational benefits. But the best brains will find it hard to make privatisation work financially.

Most rail services run at a loss and require subsidy. Once British Rail is broken up into its functional parts, the gross subsidies needed by franchised train operators rise. This need not cost taxpayers more, because the extra comes back to government via profits earned by Railtrack. But when Railtrack is sold, ongoing public spending on subsidies will rise — by £600 million a year on the best City estimate.

Can taxpayers avoid this trap? In theory, costs will be so much lower and marketing so much better in private operation that the subsidy gap will be filled. That is a gamble on long odds and a long timetable. The alter-

native would be to take out "lost" Railtrack cash flow, perhaps by burdening it with heavy long-term state loans. But that would remove most of Railtrack's sales value. Privatisation proceeds, on which the Chancellor is counting, would shrink drastically.

The proposed financial regime for Railtrack is certainly unrealistic. An initial 5 per cent return on its £6.5 billion "modern equivalent asset value", is targeted to rise to 8 per cent as costs are cut. On that basis, historic profits would reach about £900 million a year, roughly a quarter of British Rail's total revenue including existing subsidies. Hardly feasible when the system makes a loss. Mass closures beckon once initial franchises expire.

The rail regulator wants to cut access charges. An initial return of 1 per cent rising to 4 per cent might work, given that Railtrack may well pay little tax. Preferably, assets should be counted at historic cost or market value, though this would make for tricky accounting on depreciation. Railtrack could then offer investors a fair return on assets and planned investments to match the risks it runs on revenue. But investors, taxpayers and the Chancellor must realise that privatisation cannot conjure profit from thin air.



David Davies, chairman, says the group is looking at a series of acquisitions, including one in the Far East

JM bounces back from merger talks collapse

By NEIL BENNETT, DEPUTY BUSINESS EDITOR

JOHNSON Matthey, the precious metals and electronic materials group, bounced back from the collapse of its merger talks with Cookson earlier this week by revealing a 24 per cent leap in pre-tax profits to £45.2 million in the half-year to September 30.

David Davies, the chairman, said that the group was looking at a series of acquisitions, including one in the Far East, as an alternative to the Cookson merger.

He said that the two companies had tried hard to agree terms for a merger and had settled many of the issues, but could not agree on value. "We gave the merger our best shot and there was a lot going for it, but we simply could not polish it off," he said. The two sides

had already agreed that in a merger they would combine their electronic materials and precious metals businesses and that Mr Davies would become chairman and Richard Oster, of Cookson, chief executive.

Mr Davies said, however, that the results showed the strength of the group's prospects as a stand-alone business. "Johnson Matthey is on a hell of a roll. We have put in three years of very hard work and it is beginning to show."

In the half year, Johnson Matthey's materials technology business became the group's largest division for the first time, overtaking its well known catalytic converter manufacturing operations. Profits from materials technol-

ogy surged 36 per cent to £18.3 million. This was caused by strong demand for the group's electronic materials.

There was a strong first-time contribution from Ryoka Matthey, the Japanese joint venture with Mitsubishi Chemical, which started trading earlier this year.

Profits from the catalytic systems business rose 20 per cent to £15.9 million as the automotive industry in America and Europe increased output.

The group is now developing catalytic converters for heavy diesel engines and hopes that environmental legislation will soon be passed against emissions from lorries and buses. European legislation against diesel car emis-

sions is expected to come into force in 1996. Mr Davies said that Cookson Matthey ceramics, the joint venture with Cookson established in the summer, was now looking at ways to expand into markets in the Far East and set up two plants in Malaysia and Indonesia. The ceramics division, which makes dyes and transfers for ceramics, increased profits by 25 per cent to £6.4 million in the half year.

Overall, the group increased net revenues by 12 per cent to £202 million in the half year. Earnings per share rose 27 per cent to 16p, while the interim dividend is being lifted by 24 per cent to 4.2p, payable on February 6.

Times, page 27

Macdonald held back by MD payment

A PAYMENT of £316,000 to the former managing director, asked to leave in the summer, held back profits of Macdonald Martin Distilleries, producer of Glenmorangie whisky (Martin Waller writes).

Pre-tax profits rose from £2.16 million to £2.63 million in the half year to September 30 in spite of £440,000 of one-off items, the bulk relating to compensation to Neil McKerrrow, who left after a clash with Geoffrey Madrell, the incoming chairman. He was on a three-year rolling contract, received most of his entitlement.

Glenmorangie sales rose 15 per cent by volume and 19 per cent by value. Blended whisky sales fell 7 per cent by value. An interim dividend of 2.5p per A share (2.26p) or 1.25p per B share (1.13p), is due on January 13.

South West Water earnings lack fizz

By ERIC REGULY

SOUTH West Water, the utility which has appealed to the Monopoly and Mergers Commission over price limits, reported flat earnings because of higher interest charges on capital-expenditure borrowings.

Pre-tax profit rose by less than 1 per cent, to £50.6 million, in the half-year to September 30 as net interest charges more than doubled to £12.6 million. Ken Hill, group finance director, said interest charges will be roughly similar in the second half.

A substantial water price increase early this year and better results on the non-regulated side combined to push the company's operating profit to £62.5 million, up almost 14 per cent from the previous period. Group turnover was up 13.8 per cent to £143 million.

The marginally lower earn-

ings per share of 38.2p were in line with analysts' expectations. So was the interim dividend increase of 8.3 per cent, to 9.1p a share, payable on April 6, which is at the lower end of the industry range.

"The dividend is lower because they are in a worse financial position than most of the water companies," said Richard Smith, an analyst with Robert Fleming Securities.

South West shares rose 2p to 488p after release of the results, which include a restructuring charge of £3.5 million to cover the cost of 140 redundancies this year. Non-core subsidiaries, which earned pre-tax profits of £1.6 million in the first half, are being expanded. Mr Hill said "the restructuring programme will continue" but would not give details of forthcoming job losses.

Hilton deals by Briton investigated

AN AMERICAN judge has frozen a Briton's assets after the US Securities and Exchange Commission said it suspected he had used inside information to make \$425,000 in three days last week (Sean Mac Carthaigh writes from New York).

Jeffrey Morris, originally of Leeds and the owner of Wharfedale Stores, a retail chain, is accused of buying stock options in Hilton Hotels just before the hotel group made an announcement which made its shares more valuable.

The shares rose 17 per cent after it revealed, on November 17, it had retained an investment bank to consider options for Hilton "to enhance shareholder value". Mr Morris is said to have invested in Hilton on November 14, through Lehman Brothers, the brokerage house.

A hearing in a federal court has been set for December 6.

United fails to score with City

SHARES in Manchester United, the London listed football club, dropped 14p to 625p yesterday, with analysts estimating that early elimination from the European Champions League could cost the company up to £7 million.

The shares fell after the club's 3-1 defeat by Gothenburg, of Sweden, late on Wednesday, which virtually ended United's hopes of qualifying for the quarter-final stage of the competition.

The unexpected defeat of Barcelona, the Spanish champions, by Galatasaray in Turkey has left United with a slim chance of qualification, but the odds are now stacked heavily against them.

One broker said: "If you had watched the way they played, their defence was appalling. Some of their fans were selling today because they were disappointed."

Analysts estimated United could have received £4.5 million in qualification bonuses.



Edwards: City upset

about £1 million in additional gate receipts, and £1.5 million from league points.

Disappointment in the City was tempered by the fact that United, where Martin Edwards is chairman, are still favourites to retain the Premiership in England this season and can challenge for honours in the main domestic cup competition.

BASF plans joint generics venture

By COLIN NARBROUGH, WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

BASF, the German chemicals group that is paying £850 million for the prescription drugs arm of Boots, the high street retailer, forges a key role for another company in Britain in the rapid build-up of a generics business.

Jürgen Strube, the BASF management board chairman, said that Norton Healthcare, a London-based subsidiary of IVAX, the American pharmaceutical group, would bring 150 drugs into a new BASF/IVAX joint venture. Norton is the largest producer and marketer of generics in Britain.

BASF has signed a declaration of intent to set up the joint venture for producing and marketing generics in Europe. Herr Strube made clear that BASF wanted to expand its own generics operations as well as make partnerships in the sector.

The planned acquisition of

the Boots drugs business, announced last week, would boost BASF's annual turnover by about 50 per cent to about DM3 billion, he said.

BASF's pre-tax profits almost doubled in the first nine months to DM1.21 billion on 7.6 per cent higher sales, continuing in the third quarter the upturn seen at the half-way stage. The third-quarter, pre-tax profit more than tripled to DM526 million, reflecting very poor figures last year.

BASF expects its full-year, pre-tax profit to exceed DM1.6 billion, compared with the DM1.06 billion reported for 1993. Herr Strube said that BASF was clearly on its way back up.

□ Norsk Hydro, the Norwegian chemicals group, is to invest about £65 million, primarily in Britain, to increase its European production capacity for PVC.

HAYES

WILL TRAVEL ON LAND, SEA OR

AIR

WITH THE LATEST

LINE

OF LAPTOP MODEMS

A portable computer is now essential equipment for any mobile business person.

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it handles all speed, error control and data compression decisions automatically.

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

New York takes a holiday and London calms down

LONDON'S financial markets showed signs of returning to normal after the hurly-burly of the past couple of days, without the influence of Wall Street, which was closed for Thanksgiving.

Any attempt to claw back a significant portion of the 90-point plus losses of the past two days was doomed to failure, with both equities and bonds being given a wide berth by investors. This was clearly reflected in turnover levels which saw a depleted 446 million shares change hands by the close.

As a result, the FT-SE 100 index never stood much chance of clinging on to an early 17-point mark-up. Instead, it finished the session a modest 9.1 up at 3,036.6.

Brokers say there is little prospect of institutional support being revived ahead of next week's Budget and Monday's crucial cash-for-Europe vote. The pound found itself under pressure yesterday as the City began to worry about the consequences of a government defeat.

Royal Bank of Scotland created a stir as it dived 17p to 425p after warning that price competition would slow down the recent meteoric growth of its insurance arm Direct Line. Last year, Direct Line made pre-tax profits of £110 million, more than double its previous best, with brokers talking about the company being separately floated. Pre-tax profits of £120 million had already been pencilled in for the current year and £180 million next time round.

Last year, Direct Line's founder Peter Wood was paid a one-off agreed package totalling £42 million after agreeing to renounce his rights to future profit participation.

YSEL hardened 10p to 51.95 as it waited for GEC to make its next move. Last week, British Aerospace matched GEC's cash offer. BAe also advanced 9p to 443p with Salomon Brothers attempting to cover a short position. GEC firmed 2p to 277.5p.

Storehouse, the BHS and Mothercare stores group, weighed in with half-year pre-tax profits more than doubled at £24.2 million. The group forecast significant annual profit growth. But the figures failed to please brokers and the shares were marked 5p lower at 214p.

There was further disap-



Sir Malcolm Field, of WH Smith, where shares fell

pointing news for the stores sector as WH Smith fell 15p to 447p on talk of a profits downgrade from Cazenove, the company's own broker. Word is that Cazenove has cut its forecast of pre-tax profits for the current year by £7 million to £138 million. Trading is said to have been slack for much of the year and has been further depressed with

Bakyrchik, mining for gold in the wastes of Kazakhstan, fell 5p to 274p after hinting at plans to tap shareholders again two months after raising £25 million. The money is needed to develop the second stage of the project, but it is likely to be another year before a cash call is needed.

the start of the National Lottery. Long queues at the cash tills to pay for lottery tickets is said to have deterred customers using the shops to buy big ticket goods.

Atreus, the building products group, stood out with a rise of 6p at 13p, as a consortium of investors, including Bill Rooney, the former Spring Ram chief, announced plans to subscribe

for an initial 32 per cent of the company.

South West Water ran into profit taking, falling 5p to 481p after a generous increase in the dividend despite virtually unchanged pre-tax profits at the halfway stage of £50.6 million.

The group expects to hear the outcome of its appeal to the Monopolies and Mergers

Commission on the pricing review sometime in March. In the meantime, the group will be keeping a close eye on expenditure.

Allied Domecq weighed in with the first set of figures since the merger with Domecq showing pre-tax profits 7 per cent higher during the first half at £308 million. Brokers were unimpressed by the performance. The shares ended

20p lower at 555p. The group said its spirits and retailing division had performed well and there was no suggestion of the Domecq merger diluting earnings in the current year.

Trading conditions in the second half were expected to show an improvement.

Johnson Matthey, the precious metals group, which has just broken off merger talks with Cookson, finished 7p lower at 550p after revealing a near 30 per cent rise in first half pre-tax profits to £45.2 million. All divisions made a positive contribution, and the directors were excited about prospects for both Europe and the US. Shareholders were rewarded with a rise of 24 per cent in the dividend.

Babcock International marked time at 264p after forecasting an improving trend in second-half trading on the heels of a drop in interim profits.

Kleeneze, the door-to-door retailer, tumbled 10p to 138p after issuing a profits warning. The group says that figures for the year to August, last, will contain a provision for bad debts totalling £1 million. It blames weak control over the recruitment of new agents during the expansion of its Homecare division during the past couple of years. A small profit before tax is now forecast, compared with £1.05 million last time.

J Billam was another casualty, falling 19p to 123p after warning of lower profits. The company said restructuring of its Aircraft and Sheet Metal Engineers division had caused disruption. This, combined with low levels of activity at its aerospace division, would send the division into the red during the second half.

NEW YORK: Wall Street was closed for Thanksgiving Day holiday. The prices table below refers to trading on Wednesday night.

MAJOR INDICES

New York
Dow Jones Closed
S&P Composite Closed

Tokyo
Nikkei Average 18701.24 (+261.75)

Hong Kong
Hang Seng 8647.86 (+71.33)

Amsterdam
EEX Index 406.81 (+4.81)

Sydney
ASX 1885.7 (-28.6)

Frankfurt
DAX 2055.97 (+22.66)

Singapore
Straits 2236.40 (+18.59)

Brussels
General 7185.83 (+19.67)

Paris
CAC-40 1934.68 (+41.59)

Zurich
SIX Gen 648.80 (+6.40)

London
FT 100 3036.6 (+9.1)
FT-SE Mid 250 3481.2 (+7.6)
FT-SE Euroshare 100 1510.26 (+2.60)
FT-SE All-Share 1510.26 (+2.60)
FT Non Financials 1630.37 (+1.23)
FT Gold Mines 2387.7 (+0.1)
FT Food Interest 108.95 (+0.27)
FT Govt Secs 92.33 (-0.04)
Bargains 19320
SEAD Volume 464.10
LSE measures 154.17 (+0.43)
US 1.5618 (-0.0085)
German Mark 2.4341 (-0.0057)
Exchange Index 764.10.3
Bank of England official rate (4pm)
ECU 1.2725
D-SOR 1.0732
RPI 145.2 Oct (2.4%) Jan 1987/100

RECENT ISSUES

Abstract Latin Am 84 ...
Abstract Latin Wts 48 ...
Adare Print 192 +3
Ashbourne (150) 1457 ...
AZN Commodities (100) 851 ...
AZN Commodities Wts 37 ...
Calluna 86 -1
Churchill China (280) 285 ...
Eurofina (141) 143 ...
Fidelity Spec V Us 487 +2
Filtronic Comtek 163 +10
Finpro Corp (100) 100 ...
For & Col Empr C (100) 100 ...
H Govt 100 Inv (100) 101 ...
INVESTCO Korea C 97 ...
Irish Permanent (180) 221 +4
JJA Sports (215) 231 ...
Seaport (1120) 129 ...
TLG (115) 125 +1
Tele-Clint Cell (170) 165 ...
Wellington Under (100) 102 ...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Apollo Metals n/p (77) 2 ...
Kenwood App n/p (310) 16 -3
Laird Group n/p (295) 35 -2
Martin Int n/p (27) 2 -1
OMI n/p (37) 3 ...
Pressac n/p (85) 6 ...
Seon Health n/p (285) 40 -3

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:
Standard Chart 281p (+10p)
Kwik Save 585p (+8p)
Macdon Martin 'A' 705p (+30p)
Kewill Sys 255p (+10p)
Platronic Com 163p (+10p)
British Aerospace 443p (+9p)

FALLS:
Royal Bank Scot 425p (-17p)
Yoshida Chem 365p (-10p)
Man United 625p (-14p)
J Billam 123p (-19p)
GUS 547p (-9p)
Kleeneze 138p (-18p)
WH Smith 447p (-14p)
Allied Domecq 550p (-19p)
Danika B Systems 300p (-12p)

Closing Prices Page 32

TEMPUS

Keeping spirits up

WHEN is discounting not discounting? The answer, says Allied Domecq, is when it is "adding to customer value" - by offering a cur-price rate on more than one bottle of Teacher's at the supermarket. The distinction might seem fine. Allied's spirits business is stuck in the same lake of molasses that is slowing down progress at other big international drinks businesses - the inability to keep prices rising at the same rate as inflation. It was this and a lack of good news from elsewhere that sank Allied's price yesterday.

The Domecq business acquired in the spring has yet to show its potential and has been hit by problems in the Mexican economy, although it is hardly fair to pillory the Allied management for the tragic assassination of that country's favoured presidential candidate as the ink dried on the deal. The

encouraging rises in retail were to be expected on the back of the continued introduction of branded food outlets into the remaining sector. Brewing remains a real dog: a rise of 1.5 per cent in volumes, in a market that Allied says fell 0.5 per cent over the same period, speaks volumes on the kind of margins the Michael Jackson, Allied's chairman, yesterday suggested that all that was keeping the venture in existence was the Dames' insistence on a British partner.

Further progress will depend on how fast the rum of the food division can be chopped out, which is not to say the group should accept bargain-basement prices. For now, the shares sell on 14 times this year's earnings, which looks high enough.

Johnson Matthey

JOHNSON Matthey put its best foot forward yesterday but could not shake off the hangover from the collapse of its merger talks with Cookson earlier this week. The group's interim figures were all the City had expected and more. While the recovery in the catalyst systems division had been easy to predict, given the strength of the American motor industry, few had appreciated the strength of demand in the electronic materials business.

The Ryoka Matthey joint venture in Japan has given the group the springboard into Asia it badly needed, while the ceramics joint venture with Cookson has provided the critical mass for a business which always appeared too small to suit the group's ambitions. Unfortu-

nately David Davies is still

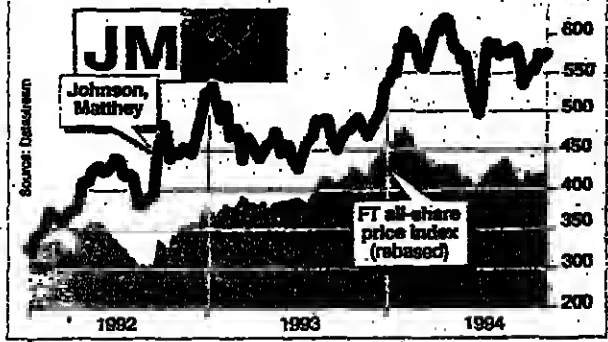
haunted by his earlier pledge to propel JM into the FT-SE 100 index, something he now regrets. The failure of the merger makes that goal seem as distant as ever.

Whether it ever joins the FT-SE 100 club, Matthey remains a high-class business.

The catalytic systems divi-

sion is a long way from going ex-growth as it expands into new applications such as diesel engines and developing markets like Asia and South America. The shares, at 17 times current year earnings forecasts, will not look expensive once the market recovers from the disappointment of being robbed of a deal.

SOLO PERFORMANCE



Storehouse

THE recovery at Storehouse is showing no signs of abating. Like-for-like sales rose by 5 per cent, underlying retail profits rose by a third and gross margins were held. The good news for shareholders is that there is more to come.

There is still a considerable latent profitability to tap into, particularly at Mothercare where margins remain too low. The new store format, now in a third of the chain, appears to be delivering both solid sales and profit increases. Its greater emphasis on clothing, which has higher margins than equipment, is helping to bolster returns. Those stores which have been converted to the format for more than a year continue to deliver good sales uplifts.

BHS should achieve margins of more than 10 per cent in the current year, which the group can expand further. Radical initiatives on improving the supply chain, coupled with benefits from

merging distribution with Mothercare, should ensure further improvements.

The expansion plans for BHS add a new growth dimension to the pattern of recovery, provided the group can control costs. To date, it has done well in restraining the cost base, although this has been on a static store base. The initial signs are promising. Costs rose by only 5 per cent in the first half while sales increased by 7 per cent. But it will need to maintain a tight rein if the shares are to continue on their steady upward trend.

Babcock Intl.

JUST as mythical alchemists could turn lead to gold, the new management at Babcock International have somehow pulled the company into profit. While their achievement should not be sneered at, the company still has a long journey back to health.

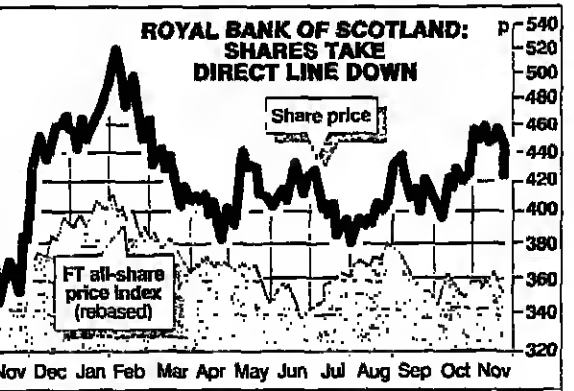
The chief task is to neutralise losses from the core en-

ergy division to allow profits from newer parts of the business, such as materials handling and management of the Rosyth Royal Dockyard, to fall through to the bottom line. Power business losses are falling, from £13.7 million to £6.8 million in the first half, as the group works through old unprofitable contracts, but it could take until 1996 to reach breakeven.

The recovery would be accelerated if Babcock won one of the four large boiler contracts in Asia for which it has been shortlisted, worth £100 million each. Otherwise, the group's bid for Rosyth, now looks unopposed, which should secure the group's largest profit earner for at least five years.

The company should pay a modest dividend at the end of the year, but the group will struggle to earn more than a penny a share. The shares at 26p are still a speculation on a long-term recovery.

EDITED BY NEIL BENNETT



COMMODITIES

LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE				ICE-LOL (London, 6.00pm)				GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES			
COCOA				C155-DLR (\$/barrel FOB)				WHEAT		BARLEY	
								[close @]		[close @]	
Dec	984.00	Mar	1041.00	Brn French	17.05	-0.10	Jan	105.40	Jan	104.75	
Jan	984.00	Jun	1052.00	Brn S (day Jan)	17.15	-0.10	Mar	107.50	Mar	107.75	
Feb	984.00	Sep	1062.00	Brn S (day Feb)	17.00	-0.10	May	109.45	May	109.75	
Mar	984.00	Dec	1074.00	W Texas Intermediate Jan	Closed		Jul	111.30	Jul	111.30	
Apr	984.00	Jan	1084.00	W Texas Intermediate Feb	Closed		Sep	95.15	Sep	94.75	
May	984.00	Feb	1094.00				Volume 290		Volume 34		
Jun	984.00	Mar	1104.00								
Jul	984.00	Apr	1114.00								
Aug	984.00	May	1124.00								
Sep	984.00	Jun	1134.00								
Oct	984.00	Jul	1144.00								
Nov	984.00	Aug	1154.00								
Dec	984.00	Sep	1164.00								
Jan	984.00	Oct	1174.00								
Feb	984.00	Nov	1184.00								
Mar	984.00	Dec	1194.00								
Apr	984.00	Jan	1204.00								
May	984.00	Feb	1214.00								
Jun	984.00	Mar	1224.00								
Jul	984.00	Apr	1234.00								
Aug	984.00	May	1244.00								
Sep	984.00	Jun	1254.00								
Oct	984.00	Jul	1264.00								
Nov	984.00	Aug	1274.00								
Dec	984.00	Sep	1284.00								
Jan	984.00	Oct	1294.00								
Feb	984.00	Nov	1304.00								
Mar	984.00	Dec	1314.00								
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Jan	984.00	Oct	2014.00								
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Nov	984.00	Aug	2114.00								
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Jan	984.00	Oct	2134.00								
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Jun	984.00	Mar	2184.00								
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Nov	984.										

The legal saga of Polly Peck begins to rise from its nadir

Jon Ashworth
charts the course
of those
in pursuit of
Asil Nadir's assets



Anthony Kett, top right, and Chris Barlow, of C&L, are following the leads given by evidence gathered by police

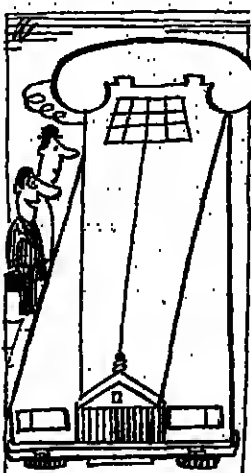
THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Doing time for \$1,000

I CANNOT imagine how it will look on their CVs, or what it might do for their job prospects, but London brokers attending the 18th annual investment conference organised by Johannesburg broker Frankel Pollak Vindere in South Africa next February are going to prison. Delegates to the six-day gathering are already being asked to pay \$1,000 to cover conference fees, events and functions — and that excludes air fares and hotel accommodation. Unless they intend to walk, they will have to fork out a \$750 supplement for the Blue Train to Cape Town. While in Cape Town, a visit to Robben Island has been arranged — to coincide with the fifth anniversary of Nelson Mandela's release from the island. Frankel's itinerary suggests that the prison visit starts at noon and ends at 4.30pm, and delegates will trust that the return passage to Cape Town — the same day — is absolutely guaranteed. In South Africa, the group's domestic travel arrangements are being handled by Darryl Stoshberg. One London dealer already tells me he would be more than happy to pay \$1,000 not to attend.

DIY men

IAN Clubb, the new chairman of Tiphook, is obviously a patch-and-mend man as he tries to put the trailer group back on more profitable rails. He yesterday appointed a new finance director, Richard Raine, who once worked for the Wickes group, and a new company secretary, Simon Enoch, formerly of B&Q.



"Doubled profits this time, I hear"

Tongue-tied

A (TRUE) variation of the ditty "there was an old woman who swallowed a fly" was related at UBS this week at a retirement presentation to Shirley Foster, the stalwart of the broker's back-office, who once swallowed a quarrel of her weekly wages. Shirley joined Phillips & Drew (as it then was) 38 years ago, and has since worked her way up to the compliance office. One of her earliest jobs when a humble clerk was to stick the stamps on contract notes. "You are too young to remember those," she kindly said. "But in those days, there was none of those mandy-pandy sponge pads about. You just used your tongue and got on with it." And so it was that a £1 stamp got stuck on her tongue and she was struck almost speechless when she swallowed it. "They only paid me £4 a week, and I was very concerned about having to replace the £1 stamp. But the partners were ever so nice about it," she mused.

Hacking in

AND who at McDonald's was chosen to tell the world that the fast-food chain is bursting into central Europe and has bought \$500,000 of ICL computers? None other than the group's managing director for central Europe... Andreas Hacker.

COLIN CAMPBELL

The task of winding up an insolvent company should be a textbook affair, but not when the company is Polly Peck. For four years, administrators have battled to salvage what they can from the mess that was once one of Britain's fastest-growing conglomerates. Bankers, trade creditors and the thousands of small investors who lost their shirts on Polly Peck shares would all like to know — what is taking the administrators so long? And what are we to make of the bizarre stories emanating from Turkey and its self-styled island appendages?

The plot is worthy of a paperback thriller. A celebrity businessman who flits in the dead of night by private plane and is holed up in a fortified villa beyond the reach of British justice. An accountant gunned down outside his office in Istanbul — and the wrong man, at that. An international web of transactions spanning New York, London and Amsterdam.

Four years on, the lead administrators at Coopers & Lybrand are as close as they have ever been to resolving the Polly Peck impasse. Agreement has been reached in principle for a distribution arrangement that would unlock more than \$200 million in funds. Formal approval of the agreement could be reached by Christmas, clearing the way for a distribution to Polly Peck creditors next year. More importantly, a structure for channelling funds would at last be cast in stone, allowing money from future disposals to be fed directly into the Polly Peck pot.

And the price of this tortuous arrangement? A tidy £30 million in costs and legal fees — the running total for four years of work that at one point involved up to 200 people in several different jurisdictions. Critics have seized on the sum as another example of "greedy" professionals taking the lion's share before everyone else gets a look in. They seem to have a point, given that the total available to creditors to date is just £80 million.

Chris Barlow and Anthony Kett of Coopers & Lybrand, lead administrators on the Polly Peck case, claim they are in a no-win situation. They could do nothing, charge minimal fees, and produce nothing for creditors. Or they could throw their resources at the problem in the belief that creditors will ultimately come out ahead.

Time will tell whether their chosen strategy pays off. Mr Barlow simply makes the point that expenditure has fallen sharply since the early days. There are now no more than between eight and ten accountants working on the case.

The initial flow chart of the Polly Peck empire was a jungle — a sprawling mass of more than 200 companies ranging from fruit packaging in northern Cyprus to television manufacturing in Turkey. Today, that

sprawl can be divided into two camps. In one is Polly Peck International, the name at the top of the flow chart. In the other, is PPI Holdings BV (Netherlands), an insolvent company that faces claims from three separate groups of creditors, one of which is Polly Peck International.

The \$200 million raised from the sale of the fresh fruit business of Del Monte in 1992 went into the PPI Holdings "pool" and has sat there gathering interest while the three separate cred-

itors struggled to decide on a means of sharing the spoils between them. The sale, announced this week, of the Vestel television business to a Turkish businessman is expected to feed another \$10 million into the pool. Finally, there is an 18 per cent stake in the Sansui consumer electronics company, valued at \$120 million but perhaps worth substantially less.

The proceeds from this, too, will be fed to PPI Holdings. Back on the other side of the fence, Mr Barlow and Mr Kett can only await developments before pitching for their slice of PPI Holdings. They have no direct control over whether Sansui is sold or not. What they do have control over — in theory at least — are the hotels and factories in northern Cyprus over which Mr Nadir is proving so

Teams of ex-SAS soldiers accompany them when they travel

light back on to the eastern Mediterranean. On Monday, sequestrators seized control of the Jasmine Court and Palm Beach in an attempt to regain some of the reputed \$15 million in unpaid taxes and social security payments owed by these and other companies controlled by Mr Nadir. His personal assets include AN Graphics, a newspaper publisher, and a bank that is said to owe the northern Cyprus authorities \$4.5 million. After two days'

of meetings, the Turkish Cypriot leader appeared on television yesterday to announce that Mr Nadir had agreed a repayment programme on the money he owes, allowing the hotels to be released. The result was yet more confusion, with the territory's attorney-general disputing that any deal had been reached.

The coalition government is divided over the Nadir issue. One party and the president sympathise with him. The junior coalition party is increasingly hostile, saying opportunities for inward investment are being lost because of him.

None of this leaves Coopers & Lybrand any closer to solving the northern Cyprus dilemma. Administrators who tried to take control of the Jasmine Court in mid-1992 were evicted by police. Mr Barlow and Mr Kett were afforded the highest security when they visited the territory in May, soon after fellow accountant David Adams was shot in Istanbul. Roads were cordoned off and men with machine guns lined the route. Teams of ex-SAS soldiers accompany them whenever they travel.

The pair have offered to sort out the overdue tax problems if the northern Cyprus authorities lend a hand. They may also be able to help overturn the EC-wide ban on citrus exports that is hitting the local farming industry. Meanwhile, the authorities squabble among themselves, while Mr Nadir lurks in his villa, thumbing his nose at the world.

Mitsubishi shaken to its foundations

Joanna Pitman reports on hard times facing Japan's big property company

In October 1989, the heirs of John D. Rockefeller Jr. sold a controlling interest in the Rockefeller Centre in Manhattan to the Mitsubishi estate company, one of the largest property companies in the world.

Soon after the sale, the property market in New York City collapsed, dragging down commercial rents and opening up a gap worth \$460 million between the Rockefeller Centre's rental income and the Mitsubishi mortgage payments.

According to a recent New York Times report, the Rockefeller Group Incorporated (RGI), now 80 per cent owned by Mitsubishi estate, lacks sufficient cash to continue paying the mortgage on the building and may be close to defaulting on the \$1.3 billion loan.

The news has shocked Tokyo and set tongues wagging in the city on the subject of the likelihood of a similar fate for the many Japanese-owned buildings in central London.

The worries stem from the fact that the parlous property market that has prompted the unconfirmed reports in New York about Mitsubishi's payments problems is almost identical to that in London. Masae Hirabayashi, property analyst at Kleinwort Benson International in Tokyo, is scathing about Mitsubishi estate's Rockefeller deal. "The acquisition has been a complete failure due to the slump in office rents in New York and to asset reduction arising from the strong yen," Mitsubishi, he said, initially used mainly appropriated bank borrowings for the original purchase and so the interest payments have been enormous.

It is by no means certain that RGI, Mitsubishi estate's holding company, will default and suggests have been made that the company is contemplating a restructuring of the mortgage so that the principal is sharply reduced. Nevertheless, it throws into high profile the huge unrealised losses held by Japanese investors in overseas property, which was bought during the dying days of Japan's asset inflation-driven bubble economy.

Japanese property and life insurance companies swooped on London as well as New York during the late 1980s and early 1990s, snapping up blocks of prestige real estate, not to mention the golf courses often picked

up site unseen, looking to all the world as if these Japanese buyers regarded their new properties as merely shiny new counters on a worldwide monopoly board. "Japanese companies have invested in several hundred buildings in London since the late 1980s. The majority of the acquisitions were made at or towards the top of the market," said Mark Cannell of Jones Lang Wootton, the property specialist.

Just like the New York market, London's central office rents have slumped since then. Real estate values have fallen by roughly 30-40 per cent in central London, and top rents for city office space has fallen from £70 per sq ft in 1989 to just £40 now.

Mitsubishi estate is exposed in London in two prime property projects. In 1985 it bought Atlas House on Cheapside and in 1990 entered into a three-way joint venture purchase of Paternoster Square dividing the deal equally with Greycoat and Park Tower Realty.

"Mitsubishi estate has no danger of defaulting on its mortgage payments for its property holdings in London. We have every intention of remaining long-term investors here. We have no plans to sell up. However, I cannot comment on the New York Rockefeller situation," said Yutaka Tajima, chief representative in London of Mitsubishi estate.

Japan's giant life insurance companies have been particularly active buyers in London. In 1989 Asahi Life Insurance bought Lodenhall Court for a reputed £120 million, and in 1991 invested heavily again in the Bishop's Gate Exchange.

Nippon Life snapped up DKB House in King William Street, London, in 1989 and then as late as 1992 made a 50 per cent investment in the Clifford Chance Building in Little Britain. The other half of the holding was bought by Wimpey, which sold it on earlier this year to the Prudential.

While defaults on mortgage payments are considered unlikely among the Japanese life companies, sell-offs are still a possibility. In August, Dai-ichi Life sold Summit House, one of its London prime holdings, to British Land, a deal with reportedly fetched £27.5 million, which was a considerable mark-down from the original price of £39 million paid for the site by Dai-ichi in 1989.

Ross Tieman on subsidies that will go on and on

Paying a big price for Railtrack



Mothballed: British Rail rolling stock awaits its fate

Selling Railtrack to pay for tax cuts is a bit like taking out a loan to go on holiday. The repayments continue long after the spending spree is forgotten.

In the case of the railways, the on-going costs take the form of a subsidy, amounting to £545 million last year. Without that injection of public money, British Rail would have lost £522 million on its operations.

Instead, after the "revenue grant", it achieved an operating profit of just £23 million, on turnover of £3.1 billion. There is no escaping that British Rail, in its previous incarnation, was fundamentally unprofitable.

Privatisation is, in part, a gamble on the ability of a reformed organisational structure to achieve a transformation. It assumes the same set of managers, operating with greater freedom and the opportunity to enrich themselves, will reverse the gap between revenue and expenditure, from loss into profit.

Privatisation was never meant to happen overnight. In April, the Government unleashed a reorganisation that saw BR divided into 60 state-owned businesses. BR's fixed assets were given to Railtrack, which operates the tracks and stations, charging 30 or so franchised train operators fees for using them to run their services.

Ownership of trains and carriages was vested in three leasing companies, which hire them out to train operators. Maintenance and support services are similarly supplied under contract.

Under the original sell-off scheme, the companies were to be sold progressively, be-

ginning with the easiest, and ending with the hardest to value. Maintenance and rolling stock companies first, then a steady drip of franchises, rounded off with the sale of Railtrack.

Now, that is to be reversed. The Government has set its heart on selling Railtrack, a business with just six months' trading record, propped up by public subsidy, whose business is in the middle of a revolution. The scenario is not promising. Government political propagandists have suggested Railtrack could be worth its nominal asset value of £6.5 billion. Bunkum.

In a study published last week, Chris Tarry, an analyst at Kleinwort Benson, put the real value at between £3.3 billion and £4.3 billion.

These figures are based on an estimate that Railtrack will make a profit of £700 million in its first year. But it is far too early for the efficiency improvements that privatisation is designed to achieve to be

realised. The profitability of Railtrack will depend upon how much the train operating companies are required to pay for using its services.

And that, in turn, will hinge upon how much subsidy the Government, through Roger Salmon, its franchising director, supplies to the rail operating companies.

How will the Government decide how much subsidy is needed? According to Mr Tarry, "In essence, the rate of return that Railtrack is required to achieve will determine the level of subsidies paid...."

To this end, the franchising director will, in fact, commit the Government to the long-term financial support of the industry."

By Mr Tarry's estimates, the subsidy will be enormous. When Railtrack was intended to remain in the public sector, the Government decided that its pre-tax rate of return should start at 5.1 per cent and reach 8 per cent by 1998. This

implies pre-tax profits rising from about £700 million to £900 million to £950 million.

Independent advisers have suggested that the railway may be able to achieve efficiency savings of up to 30 per cent in some parts of their business. Yet even so, Mr Tarry calculates that the underlying subsidy to Railtrack will rise from £930 million last year to £1.6 billion if the base year target rate of return of 5.1 per cent is achieved.

Shifting Railtrack into the private sector may cause the rate of return to be changed to more realistic levels. By the same measure, the privatised water industry manages quite well with a 1 per cent figure.

The worrying thing is how little the subsidy changes. According to Mr Tarry, even with a rate of return of just 0.5 per cent, a subsidy of £1.3 billion a year would still be required.

Of course, Railtrack can cut its costs and improve efficiency and reliability of services, not least by investing to modernise the very patchy network it has inherited. Franchised train companies may succeed in increasing the number of passengers carried, and hence train traffic.

The Government, for its part, may extend road charging and raise airport taxes to force travellers back on to the trains, increasing their revenues. But when will the subsidy obligation end?

With sufficient guarantees, the City may buy Railtrack. But let's assume Mr Tarry's estimates are right. How will the taxpayer respond, having spent his windfall, when he sees a company making £700 million a year receive twice as much from the public purse?

BUSINESS LETTERS

Dubious benefit of increasing automation

From Mr Tom Cross
Sir, The hesitancy present in Anatole Kaletsky's expression of optimism about the end of mass unemployment (Economic View, November 17) would be less worrying if somewhere there was to be found an argued rationale that growing automation, driven by information technology, will not lead to the relative impoverishment of those not directly so employed. Your report (Pennington, November 18) of business turning its back on growth appears to support such a view.

The commonsense instincts

of ordinary people not to spend at the present time appear to be another pointer to this. They see little sign that recent productivity increases — largely led by automation and information technology — have added much, if anything,

to the general well-being. Spurs to faster economic growth will require more than the control of inflation. Yours faithfully,
TOM CROSS,
24 Windmill Drive,
Aldern, Cheshire.

Rolls-Royce link

From Mr John Roberts
Sir, The Rolls-Royce/Allison relationship certainly dates back to the Second World War.

I recall as a young RNRV officer, on the staff of the then Engineer in Chief of the Fleet, that it was said that Winston Churchill instructed Sir Stafford Cripps (head of aircraft production) to persuade Lord Hives, then in overall charge at RR to arrange for all the drawings of the famous Merlin engine to be sent to Allison so that production of this splendid engine could be increased.

The American company tried very hard, but was never able to match the performance of the RR-built Merlin, which, of course, eventually powered the US Mustang aircraft, a very successful combination. Yours faithfully,
JOHN K. ROBERTS,
The Old Nursery,
Easton, Woodbridge,
Suffolk.

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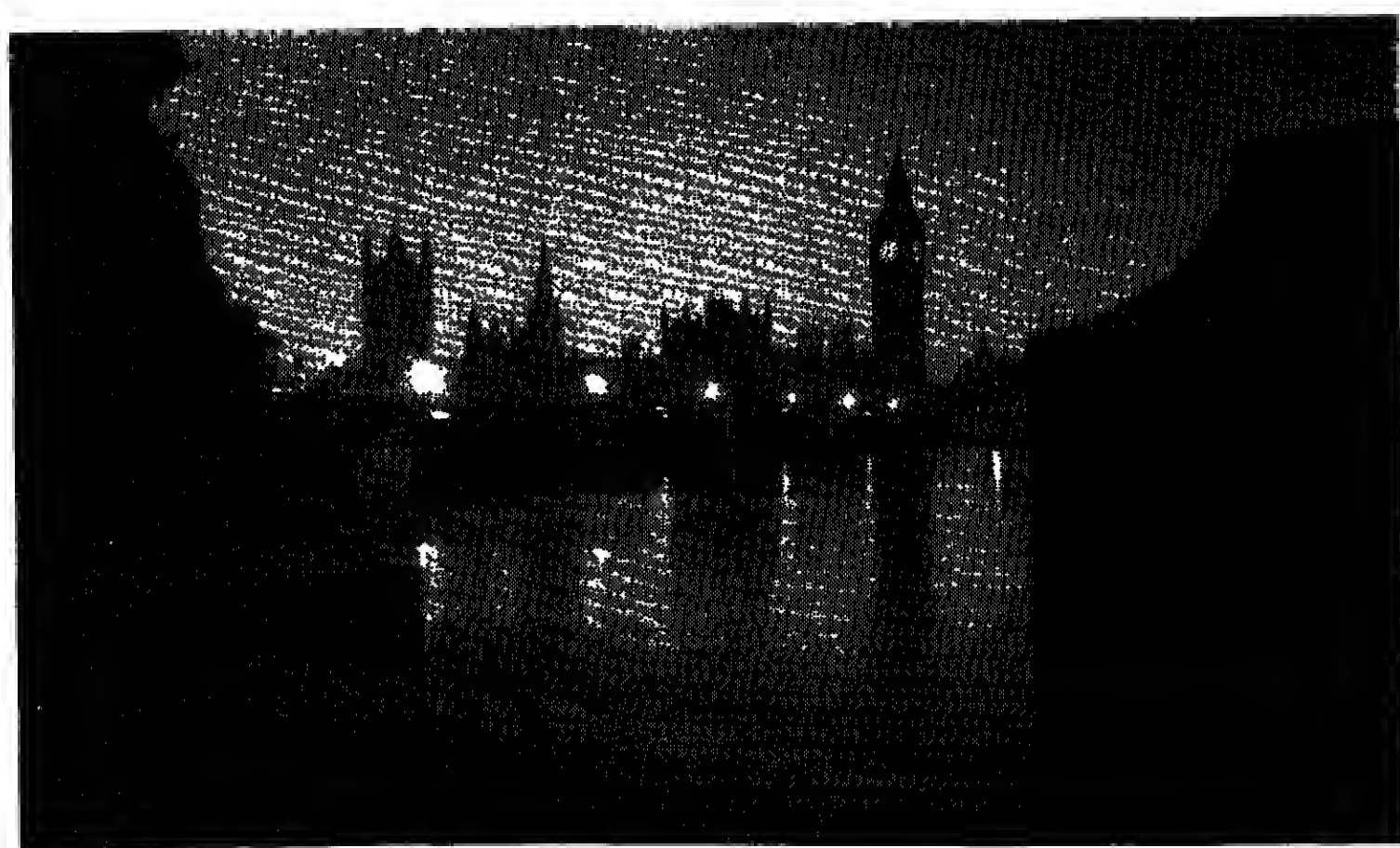
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7 DAYS

SMALL FIRMS TRAINING LOANS

هكذا! من الامم

Cost of work accidents 'real burden on business'

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

WORK accidents rather than safety inspections are the real cost burdens on business, the Government's principal safety watchdog said yesterday as it reported the lowest ever number of deaths from accidents at work.

Some business leaders — especially from small companies — believe that the level of health and safety regulation in Britain is too high, but the Government's Health and Safety Commission (HSC) insists that the main cost for business is from accidents themselves.

Maintaining that the real rate of accidents "remains disgracefully high", Frank Davies, HSC chairman, said: "The costs of these accidents are the real burden on industry — not the supposed overhead of Health and Safety Executive inspectors."

Presenting the commission's annual report, Mr Davies said that the HSC would be launching an extended public debate next year about whether or not it was getting its regulatory approach to business right, especially towards small business. Mr Davies said he had paid particular attention to small

business since he took over as chairman a year ago. "Small firms are the biggest challenge facing the commission, and so facing me. Small firms need more help from us and more clarity about what is required. We shall try to supply it."

The report revealed a further fall in the number of fatal accidents at work. In 1993-94, a total of 379 people were killed in work-related accidents, compared with 452 in 1992-93. Of the new total, 235 were employees, 48 were self-employed, and 96 were members of the public.

HSE officials accept that part of the reason for the continuing fall in fatalities stems from structural change in industry as employment moves away from higher risk industries such as coal mining and manufacturing towards the lower risk service sector.

The report shows that 28,924 people suffered major injuries, such as broken limbs, amputations or severe burns, compared with 28,722 the previous period. There were 134,841 injuries causing absence from work for three or more days, compared with 143,283 in 1992-93.

John Rimington, HSE director-general, gave a warning against complacency, pointing out a number of "near-miss" accidents, including an explosion in Castleford, a big accident and fire at Associated Oriel on Merseyside, and an explosion in July that wiped out a tenth of the UK's oil refining capacity at Texaco in Milford Haven.

The HSC welcomed a change from Brussels that seemed to be bringing forward fewer new health and safety legislation and focusing more on non-legislative moves. It also welcomed an increase in the average fines imposed by the courts for safety prosecutions, which, it said, had risen from £1,390 to £3,061 in the past year.

But Labour Party and trade union leaders said the report showed that the number of safety inspectors was still inadequate to cover industry's safety needs and to provide proper protection.

Labour pointed out that prosecutions brought by the HSE had fallen from more than 2,600 five years ago to less than 1,800, according to the report.



Davies: public debate

Edmond in reverse takeover

By Our City News Editor

EDMOND Holdings, the housebuilder operating in the East Midlands, East Anglia, Yorkshire and Humberside, yesterday unveiled a reverse takeover by Linden, an unquoted company with interests in Surrey, Sussex and Cheshire.

Edmond is issuing 78.8 million new shares to Linden, representing 60.7 per cent of the enlarged equity and valued at £16.1 million.

Edmond shares were suspended at 21p. Because Linden was set up in 1991, the enlarged company cannot fulfil the three-year trading requirement for admission to the official list, so the shares are likely to resume trading on the Junior Unlisted Securities Market.

In 1993, Linden earned pre-tax profits of £911,000, compared with a loss of £71,000 in 1992. In the half-year to the end of June, profits were £396,000. At June 30, net assets were £1.11 million.

Edmond said trading conditions continued to improve, with sales and reservations up 42 per cent in the ten months to the end of October.



Peter Kane, chairman of Business Post, left, and Torquil Montague-Johnstone, finance director

Business Post delivers £3.8m profit

By Martin Barrow, City News Editor

BUSINESS Post, the parcels and courier services company floated on the stock market last year, increased profits to £3.8 million before tax from £2.2 million in the half year to September 30, reflecting a strong advance in operating margins.

Turnover rose to £23.6 mil-

lion from £19.1 million and operating profits rose to £3.7 million from £2.3 million. Operating margins improved to 15.6 per cent from 11.7 per cent through improved operational efficiency and sales mix.

The interim dividend is increased by 58 per cent to 1.9p a share (1.2p), payable on

January 23. Earnings advanced to 5.1p a share from 3.3p. The shares rose 13p to 152p yesterday.

Capacity has increased at the company's national hub in Birmingham and a new hub is being built at Reading, following expansion at six other hubs since flotation. Peter

Kane, the chairman, said that the hub improvement was beginning to generate incremental sales, and there was further scope to increase market share through continuing organic growth.

Turnover in October was 26 per cent higher than in the comparable period of 1993.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Concentric advances in spite of problems

PRE-TAX profits of Concentric, the manufacturer of engineering components primarily for the automotive industry, edged higher to £10.24 million, from £9.36 million, in spite of losses at a key subsidiary.

The company has increased the total dividend to 6.15p a share, from 5.80p, with a 4.29p final, payable on January 19. Earnings were 12.73p a share, rising from 12.03p. On the stock market, the shares were unchanged at 178p. Concentric Pressed Products slipped into the red, hampered by an unreliable market for automotive components, bad debts and an aggressive market for sheet steel. At group level, pressure on margins continues.

Kleeneze issues warning

KLEENEZE, the catalogue sales company, warned shareholders it was likely to earn only a small profit in the year to August 31. In the previous 12 months the group had a pre-tax profit of £1.1 million. The problem stems in part from poor control over recruitment of new agents during the expansion of Kleeneze Homecare in 1993, which has led the group to make a provision for bad debts of about £1 million. The shares fell 18p to 138p.

Fenchurch ahead

FENCHURCH, the insurance broking group floated on the stock market a year ago, defied difficult market conditions to lift pre-tax profits to £7.79 million, from £4.56 million, in the year to September 30. The company said that rates have weakened in the marine market, particularly in America. Pro-forma earnings rose by 15.6 per cent to 14.1p a share. A 5.4p final dividend, making 8p and due on March 10, is 11.1 per cent up on the flotation prospectus's notional payout.

Jobs linked to pollution

MORE than 700,000 new jobs and savings to the taxpayer of more than £3 billion would be generated if the Government backed tougher action to protect the environment, according to a report by Friends of the Earth. Charles Secrett, executive director of the group, urged the Chancellor to recognise the links between a cleaner world and increased employment. The report claims stricter pollution control laws for the water industry could add an extra 690,000 jobs alone.

Footwear firm buys in France

By Our City Staff

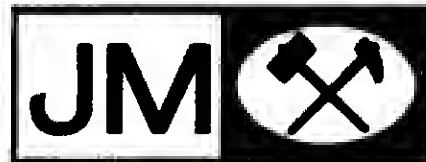
SHARES in Chamberlain Phipps, offered at 165p in August, rose another 3p to 183p yesterday on encouraging news of current trading and the company's first acquisition since flotation.

Chamberlain, which makes footwear and footwear materials, is to acquire Ouest Parts SA, the biggest supplier of components to French shoe manufacturing, for Fr74 million.

Quest Parts achieved taxable profits of Fr12 million in the year to September 30, 1993, and had net assets of Fr18 million at the year-end. Results for the year to September 30, 1994, are expected to be broadly in line with 1993.

Dan Sullivan, chairman of Chamberlain, said that Quest Parts would be used as a platform for further expansion on the Continent. "It provides the group not only with the major domestic supplier to the French footwear market but with an additional sales opportunity for the UK-based materials division," he said.

Chamberlain yesterday reported actual pre-tax profits of £4.5 million for the half year to October 1, up from £1 million previously. On a pro-forma basis, reflecting flotation, profits rose to £5.22 million before tax. There is an interim dividend of 2.7p a share.



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Profit before tax	£45.2m	£35.2m	+28%
Earnings per share	16.0p	12.6p*	+27%
Interim dividend	4.2p	3.4p	+24%

* Excluding tax saving on scrip dividend

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Constructors seek export aid

By Colin Narbrough, World Trade Correspondent

THE construction industry has called on the Government to demonstrate publicly its commitment to the industry's export trade by increasing bilateral aid and using it to promote exports.

Frank Kennedy, president of the Export Group for the Constructional Industries

(EGCI) told his organisation's annual lunch at the Savoy Hotel in London yesterday that such a commitment would have "tremendous impact". He said the Overseas Projects Fund should be increased, particularly for schemes involving private finance. Further extensions of

official export credit guarantees for emerging markets would be most welcome in addition to the opening of modest cover this year for Vietnam, Kazakhstan and Lebanon.

Mr Kennedy, managing director of the engineering and construction division of George Wimpey, called on the Government to give "unashamed support" for exporters similar to that provided by the Clinton Administration to secure contracts for American companies. British companies were facing increasingly aggressive international competition, notably from the Americans.

He drew attention to a recent study, commissioned by EGCI, which indicated that the annual value of Britain's construction industry exports could be as low as £600 million, a fraction of what was achieved in the 1970s.

Although construction activity in export markets was increasing significantly year on year, the export value directly generated by construction activity was "static and fairly modest".

Mr Kennedy urged the Government to provide a strong domestic market as a base for building export business and he appealed for better cooperation between the construction industry and government agencies to foster exports.

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هكذا من الأهل

INFOTECH

Online to God: electronic rosaries play synthesised music and computer confession programs offer absolution, says Nigel Burke

Software for every sinner

Deep down few of us like using technology for extremely personal messages. That is why we would not fax a love letter or inform someone about a death in the family by electronic mail and why there is a tacit, psychological need for the written word.

In our dealings with God and the eternal, we perhaps still feel more comfortable with parchments and engraved stones. No body has come close to having extreme unctious delivered by teleconference, but digital practices are encroaching on religious worship. We have already committed our wealth to transient electronic media, so can religious faith be too far behind?

Rosary beads are in some sense an engineered aid to worship. Some churches use recorded bells, and tapes are used in many mosques, as a substitute for the muezzin, to call the faithful to prayer. The principle of automation was long ago added to the Tibetan prayer wheel, but electronic rosaries have only been available for two years. The device's patentee, Father Pasquale Silla, claims steady sales at Italian places of pilgrimage. The rosary resembles a Nintendo Gameboy and, at £35, is comparatively cheap. Synthesised music accompanies menu-driven texts for Hail Mary observances and silent reflections.

The machine has no graphics

capability, but is decorated with a picture of the Madonna. While the electronic rosary enjoys the church's acquiescence, Greg Garvey, a professor of art at the Concordia University in Montreal, has found that his confession system has been resisted. His software prescribes penances for whatever sins the user confesses through keyboard entry.

There is nothing new in penitents being prescribed a going rate for a given sin, but the software is more than just a database. By requiring the user to type "Bless me Father, for I have sinned," it has pretensions to priesthood. With artificial intelligence still undeveloped, artificial vocation is hardly plausible.

Father Tony Rogers, a consultant on the English Catholic church's liturgical committee believes that a personal meeting with a priest is essential. "Whenever possible, the penance is geared towards personal circumstances, and a computer could not choose the appropriate response," he says.

World Wide Web browsers on the Internet can attempt to use computer scientist Ken Lang's confession page to point and click their way to a state of grace. A Mosaic Web interface will offer a hypertext choice of confessing to murder, adultery, sloth, avarice and the traditional favourites, along with new-age venial sins such as "misplaced priorities".

The address of this electronic confession booth for those with Internet access is: <http://another.learning.cs.cmu.edu/priest.html>.

The Internet is also full of informational texts about different faiths. The word of God has been digitised and widely accepted. Franklin's stand-alone electronic bible has been around for a decade along with various concordances. Rapid text searching means that it is now far easier to summon up and select favourable quotations.

Finding out the number of times that, say, *smiling* appears in the Old Testament is now a trivial pursuit, not the work of a lifetime. Hodder and Stoughton have released *Worshipmaster*, a program designed to find suitable readings and hymns for all dates and occasions, and it has enthusiasts and detractors among Church of England vicars.

Networking is beginning to enmesh religion as it has enmeshed every other enterprise. In 1992 The BBC Sunday programme *This is the Day* launched *Prayerline*, a telephone line for the automated exchange of prayers.

Persons wishing to be prayed for and persons wishing to pray for others can leave and retrieve messages on a standard-charge number, and the system has recently



The power of the church: can the intimate relationship between a priest and parishioner be replaced by an onscreen dialogue?

been upgraded to digital storage, dispensing with tape. On the other hand, the BBC's premium rate *Thoughtline*, which dispensed devotional talks, did not become popular.

Steve Benson, producer of religious programmes at the BBC, has only limited enthusiasm for telephone devotion, but he is excited by the BBC's achievements in real-time networked worship.

When integrating the voices of church choirs by satellite link, where the choirs cannot take their timing from each other, the speed of light imposes a different propagation delay on each audio/video link. So each choir's music has to be fed into digital-delay lines and mixed for broadcast at a central location. Teaching the world to sing is a high-tech achievement.

The advantages of a religion like

Quakerism, for example, for online international worship become apparent. Lacking the ornate, multimedia elements of other religions, the austere Quaker observances occupy little bandwidth, and could be achieved on today's Internet.

Some will embrace technological aids to worship, some will demur, but who could welcome the ways in which technology is replacing the functions of religion? The Protestant work ethic has been largely

superseded by the pager, as a whip for the idle.

The dread of an omniscient deity helped to instil a conscience. The omnipresent video camera is taking up that role. By the time we go to meet our maker, we could be buried in a graveyard of backlit liquid-crystal display headstones, where the most popular epitaph will be *Game Over*.

Health probe

AN American government report into whether mobile cellular phones can present a health risk says that available scientific evidence is inconclusive. The US General Accounting Office's report says: "No research has been completed on long-term human exposure to low levels of radiation specifically from portable cellular telephones."

Unlike car phones and cordless phones, cellular phones antennae are close to a person's head when phones are in use, raising concerns about adverse health effects.

Monopoly fear

MICROSOFT'S proposed \$1 billion offer for another software company, Intuit, is facing scrutiny from the US Justice department, which has made a request for more information from the organisation. Competitors fear that Microsoft will use the acquisition to



monopolise the future market for on-line financial services. Intuit makes Quicken, the most popular personal-finance software package.

Preloaded

FROM Thursday, all British versions of Compaq's Presario personal computers will be sold preloaded with software that gives access to the Internet group of computer networks. The software, EasyNet, includes a good pack-

age for accessing the World Wide Web, the simplest way of using the Internet. Joining the service will cost £29, and a monthly subscription is £11.60.

Blurred vision

IF YOU are worried about other people being able to see what is on your computer screen, there is an answer. The Secure View Screen, which costs £85, plus VAT, comes in versions for both desktop and

portable computers and promises to blur the information on your screen when looked at from an angle.

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The *Times* online service includes articles from and discussion areas for the Infotech, Travel, Media and Marketing and Education sections in the paper. Details: 071-757 7080.

Infotech is edited by Matthew May. E-mail address: matm@timeseddelphi.com

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

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How to get rid of a ghost

A system that could improve the quality of television pictures was demonstrated this week. George Cole writes. The development, by the Independent Television Commission (ITC) and NTL, a broadcast and telecommunications company, is designed to reduce or eliminate ghosting.

Ghosting is the term given to multiple images and irritating shadows on a television screen. It is often caused by an large obstruction, such as a hill, tall building or a line of trees, lying between the transmitter and television aerial. Ghosting also disrupts teletext and sub-titling services, often making the information unreadable.

The new system uses a special ghost-cancelling reference signal, which is transmitted along with the programme signal. It is inserted on an unused picture line and is ignored by ordinary television receivers.

Television sets equipped with ghost-cancelling circuitry, however, can detect the signal and compare it with one stored in a memory chip. Paul Gardner, the transmission system project manager at the ITC, says that the system should not be expensive for broadcasters to use.

Philips, the Dutch electronics giant, plans to introduce a ghost-cancelling set-top box to the market in 1996, to be priced at between £150 and £200. The company says that television receivers with built-in ghost-cancelling circuitry could appear the year after. The system is expected to add between £25 and £50 to the price of a conventional television set.

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TEMENOS SYSTEMS

Could you become one of the band of Macintosh experts who can sell their skills for up to £400 a day? David Guest reports

Guidelines for would-be gurus

In any other walk of life, a guru is a spiritual teacher. In computing, where spirituality is not so highly prized, a guru is someone who can make £400 a day operating an Apple Macintosh.

The term Mac Guru is used, for example, by Mediatec, an Apple specialist recruitment agency based in Birmingham, to describe those versatile individuals whose talents with a computer go beyond the immediate job in hand.

Danise Hickman, managing director of Mediatec, says: "In line with other industries that now look for multi-skilling of their staff, the computer graphics and related fields want their operators to be competent throughout a range of software."

Many companies also expect their staff to take responsibility for aspects of computer operations that would lie with specialist systems departments in many other areas of information technology. It is not uncommon for Macintosh operators to install software, supervise networks, perform troubleshooting roles to keep the systems running and still use a variety of programs to get the original job done.

Sue Zange, Mediatec's commercial manager, says: "People who are that good say to themselves: 'Why work for someone else, why not go freelance and name my own price?' Many of these people do

become self-employed. They know they are that good, and they are free to work on exciting projects, all over Europe.

"The gurus are expensive, so some companies take them on for perhaps three to six months at a time, then bring in more junior people as the project gets under way and the guru moves on."

Not all Apple specialists work in this way and there is at least as much demand for permanent recruits as for freelance contract work, although the freelance market seems to be growing more quickly.

Nor are they all so handsomely rewarded. Being paid £400 a day is unusual. Mediatec notes that, depending on the region, a freelance operator with experience in page make-up and illustration-manipulation programs may get £15 an hour, and skills in the emerging technology of multimedia—bringing sound and video to computers

—can command £25 or more an hour.

But the idea of a computer operator who does so much more than use the programs is almost exclusively a feature of Apple installations. Where other conventional IBM-style PCs are used, there is a class of person known to suppliers, management committees and consultants as the PC champion.

A champion is usually an enthusiast who learns the system inside out and proves extremely helpful to colleagues in solving problems. But such individuals are increasingly seen as an unacceptable part of the cost of a PC. Their employers argue that the time of professionals who use PCs is too valuable to be spent sorting out other PC users' problems.

Lance Crozier is a Mac manager with the advertising agency Leagas

Delaney. Largely self-taught, he admits that ten years ago he had no interest in computers. He declares himself in computer-speak as "only a pair of sandals short of an anorak". Mr Crozier says: "I think people are curious about the Mac. It is unusual to see someone sit at a Mac and not explore a bit further. Perhaps they are slightly shocked to find out what they can do."

His business card carries no job title, he says. That could be taken to confirm the suggestion that Mac specialists are expected to do a little of everything. "Assembling advertisements is the basic function," he explains.

Other aspects of the job involve a combination of creative and technical skills. "You need a good understanding of typography," Mr Crozier says. "And we have to keep the systems sweet—including the Macintoshes and a number of peripherals such as colour printers."

Ms Hickman says that Mac gurus come from two distinct sources: some have a technical background and others have worked in design. "The design people may have been trained to a basic level and have taught themselves from then on. They just love the Macintosh and get into it in a big way."

Before IBM-type PCs had Microsoft Windows, it was widely acknowledged that Apple users became conversant with more programs than people using PCs. The system encouraged experimentation. Not everyone saw this as an unqualified boon. All personal computers were intended as aids to personal productivity, but there was a suspicion that Apple users spent too much time experimenting.

The emergence of the Apple specialist is largely a result of the widespread use of the Mac in design work. If Apple takes another step and dominates multimedia in the same way, strictly technical skills—such as, for example, in programming—may be needed.

Will the demand for Mac gurus persist? "Yes, I think so, at least until the next big change," Mr Crozier says. "A lot of jobs have been replaced by computers and I think it is naive to imagine that could not happen again. But the people on the digital bandwagon are likely to lead the change."



Lance Crozier, Mac manager: "We have to keep the system sweet"

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IT Projects Manager - Passenger Services

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Test tube challenges the chip

Leonard Adleman is pleased to announce the birth of the first test-tube computer. After a pregnancy lasting 35 years and a labour of four hours, molecules of DNA have been used to compute the answer to a complex mathematical problem. Could this biological experiment spell salvation for our familiar electronic boxes of tricks that rely on silicon chips and wires?

The attraction of using molecules to calculate is that they are quick, energy-efficient, and small. Dr Adleman explains: "Today's supercomputers can execute about a trillion operations a second. Molecular computers could conceivably execute more than a thousand trillion operations a second. They could also be as much as a billion times more energy efficient. And storing information in DNA requires about a trillionth of the space needed by existing storage media, such as video tape."

Dr Adleman did his computational molecular biology experiment in Los Angeles, where he holds the chair in computer sciences at the University of Southern California's school of engineering.

'They could also be as much as a billion times more energy efficient'

He is not aiming to force everyone to throw away their hardware and software and replace it with tiny tubes of DNA. "I am more interested," he says, "in the potential of this line of inquiry to yield insights into the relationship between biology and computation. DNA is the substrate of life and it is apparently suitable as a 'substrate for computation'. It may be that in some important sense these two properties are the same."

Dr Adleman has a distinguished record in conventional computing and is best known for his work on computer security as the "A" in the widely used RSA (Rivest-Shamir-Adleman) encryption system, developed while he was at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In addition, 11 years ago, one of his students demonstrated a new kind of computer program designed to reproduce itself surreptitiously. Dr Adleman was the first to coin the now-familiar term "computer virus", again reflecting his tendency to see computers in biological terms.

Dr Adleman chose to work with DNA, to see whether mathematical structures could be encoded in

After a 35-year pregnancy, DNA molecules have proved to be as clever at maths as a computer, reports Max Glaskin



Dr Adleman in his laboratory: molecular computation might compete with electronic methods

molecules, because many techniques for manipulating it have been developed since the Nobel laureates James Watson and Francis Crick first revealed its double-helix structure.

"This other setting provides one with the tools to be so exquisitely selective and sensitive," he says. "For example, one can detect and

amplify a single desired molecule from a solution consisting of vast quantities of similar but undesirable molecules."

The task he set the sub-microscopic double spirals of DNA will be familiar to travel agents. It is known in mathematics as the "directed Hamiltonian path problem" and it produces a route-

planning schedule. In effect, he selected seven airports, each of which has only one departing and one incoming flight. Dr Adleman wanted to plan a schedule for a round trip that would take him to every airport just once.

This may seem simple, but when the number of airports and flights grows even moderately larger, the

number of possible itineraries becomes astronomical. Identifying the right itinerary among them is a mammoth task. Even the best-known algorithms running on the fastest supercomputers will fail to find a solution. Moreover, mathematical analysis has shown that a truly efficient algorithm will probably never be found.

So Dr Adleman synthesised DNA sequences to represent flights and allowed 30 trillion of them to bind together in a test tube for four hours. Molecules for all combinations of flights formed. Given the sheer number of reacting molecules, probability makes it virtually certain that, by pure chance, a molecule will form that corresponds to a complete round trip.

Finding that molecule in the test tube was relatively easy. The way that Dr Adleman had sequenced the components of the DNA molecules meant that the one representing a complete round trip would be the longest. He used standard tools of molecular biology to isolate it, then decoded the sequence of the molecules that had bound together and revealed the right schedule.

Dr Adleman, of course, is not in-

'The potential of molecular computation is impressive'

terested solely in helping travel agents. The solution to such problems is important in several applications, including designing telephone networks and artificial-intelligence problem-solving.

Before we can exchange our computer files for computer phials, computer manufacturers must overcome several hurdles. "The potential of molecular computation is impressive," Dr Adleman says. "What is not clear is whether such huge numbers of inexpensive operations can be productively used to solve real computational problems."

"I think it is important to be able to implement more subtle algorithms such as ones which do a more 'intelligent' search of the solution space. For this to happen, it may be necessary to find or develop new molecular 'primitives'. This appears to me to be the biggest hurdle — and the most interesting scientifically."

Nonetheless, he is hopeful that, for problems where massively parallel searches need to be done, molecular computation might compete with electronic computation in the short term. Meanwhile, father and child are both well.

A Big Mac with ICL on the side

Decades of investment in eastern Europe may pay off at last as British computers move in to McDonald's



Andrew Hacker, of McDonald's: a contract for ICL

The British-based computer company ICL is to supply computer services to new restaurants being set up throughout the former eastern bloc countries by the fast food chain McDonald's.

The agreement could be a sign that ICL's long involvement in central and eastern Europe, which started to pay off. ICL has tried to sell equipment throughout most of the region, including the Soviet Union for more than 25 years. It was the first western computer company to be accredited for trade with the Soviet Union in 1968 and opened an office in Poland in 1963.

For most of that time ICL was mocked by competitors who said, with some merit, that it was concentrating on such a difficult region because it was one of the few places outside Britain where it would stand any chance of exporting its computers at a time when most of the rest of the world was buying American technology.

Chris Stahl, vice-president of international trade for ICL, admits that the company went through tough periods in eastern Europe. "There were some bad years with no business placed for a year or two. But we didn't withdraw and I think we were rewarded for that. And we had to become good at bartering anything from bicycles and Czech crystal to tractors."

Now opportunities for computer companies are very different, as large and small companies expand throughout

the region. McDonald's, for instance, expects to increase its present number of 60 restaurants in central and eastern Europe to 500 by the year 2000. While the company also looked into hiring large American computer companies such as IBM, Digital Equipment and Hewlett Packard, it says it wanted to deal with only one company for all the countries in the area and that ICL was chosen because it already has offices in eastern Europe.

"Starting in 1995, we will connect Hungary and the Czech Republic with the Vienna office through electronic mail links," says Andrew Hacker, managing director of McDonald's central Europe. "We have also started to work with ICL in the other countries where we are going to do business in the near future — namely Bulgaria, Romania and Latvia."

Establishing E-mail (electronic mail) links is important, he says, because of a poor telephone infrastructure, and the fact that sending E-mail is cheap.

The initial agreement with McDonald's is worth only £320,000. But ICL now largely owned by the Japanese company Fujitsu, is predicting that future business with McDonald's and other companies in the area should result in revenues for eastern Europe increasing fourfold to £200 million by the end of the decade.

MATTHEW MAY

Should computers in schools be used for learning or teaching?

The on-screen classroom is put to the test



IT at school: pupils' enjoyment is all-important

The culture of "personal empowerment", packaged and sold to the commercial computer user by hardware and software manufacturers, has had its parallel in schools.

The use of computers in the classroom has been largely associated with the use of information technology as a tool. It has been embodied in the national curriculum, where there is an emphasis on the development of skills in communication, data handling, measurement and modelling with computers.

Heavy investment by government and schools over the past 15 years has sought to support this model of IT across the curriculum.

However, there are concerns that this may be about to change. The Department for Education has a preoccupation with "basic skills". The official view is that children are not achieving sufficiently high standards of numeracy or literacy. Against that background, it was no surprise when the department commissioned the National Council for Educational Technology (NCET) to manage a trial of integrated-learning systems.

These are systems in which a large resource bank of learning material is stored on computer, with management software which can monitor the interaction of pupils and record their performance.

The most common implementation in schools involves the use of a dedicated network, with a server containing the content, which may be supplied as many as 12 CD-ROMs. Children log on to the system for a short period each day, don headphones and complete a set of tasks.

Decisions about the content of a session are based on recorded "scores" from previous occasions. The result should be a course which suits the pace and ability of each student, thereby allowing individuals to achieve their full potential.

These systems have proved effective in boosting basic skills in some American schools, particularly for remedial work in mathematics.

When you give pupils access to a computer on demand there are remarkable outcomes in terms of curriculum development and pupil learning. For example, the use of word-processors helps the development of deeper understanding and reflection in children's writing. Spreadsheets promote greater access to difficult mathematical concepts and conventions.

Perhaps, in an ideal world, we could give children access to integrated learning systems and a portable computer. In reality, it will not happen for the majority — at least not in the immediate future.

So what is more important for the education of the inheritors of the information age? An understanding of and ability to use powerful electronic information systems, or the ability to click the right answer to a maths or spelling question on a computer screen? The implications of the wrong choice could have a fundamental effect on our national future.

ANGELA MCFARLANE
The author is project director of the information technology unit at Homerton College, Cambridge.

system which pupils enjoy and which produces such effective learning?

There are objections from those who feel that the prospect of children wearing headphones which isolate them from the rest of their class, logging on to a computer and sitting with eyes fixed to a screen, is not one they wish to see in our schools.

For the moment, the children would be on screen for only 30 minutes a day, just for basic skills. But the creators of the systems believe they can be used to deliver most of the curriculum, if not all. At the same time, they could monitor and provide feedback on pupils' performance in all areas of their work.

When a report, commissioned by the education department, was published in 1993 it showed that there was little measurable impact of information technology on learning. It also highlighted a lack of access to IT. This contrasts strongly with another NCET report on the use of portable computers in schools, published last month.

When you give pupils access to a computer on demand there are remarkable outcomes in terms of curriculum development and pupil learning. For example, the use of word-processors helps the development of deeper understanding and reflection in children's writing. Spreadsheets promote greater access to difficult mathematical concepts and conventions.

Perhaps, in an ideal world, we could give children access to integrated learning systems and a portable computer. In reality, it will not happen for the majority — at least not in the immediate future.

So what is more important for the education of the inheritors of the information age? An understanding of and ability to use powerful electronic information systems, or the ability to click the right answer to a maths or spelling question on a computer screen? The implications of the wrong choice could have a fundamental effect on our national future.

ANGELA MCFARLANE
The author is project director of the information technology unit at Homerton College, Cambridge.

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مكتبة الأصيل



POP page 39

I'm not just a pretty face, says the rising American country singer, Sheryl Crow

ARTS

POP page 40

Vitalogy, an angry new album from Pearl Jam, leaves the corpse of grunge far behind



THEATRE: A well-meaning but sententious musical; and still life in Pinter's *Landscape*



Simon Burke as Young Hayashi and Meredith Braun as Hideko in *Out of the Blue*: an unlikely plot and impeccably worthy sentiments do not add up to box-office receipts

Earnest but not an earner

Benedict Nightingale finds that good songs cannot lighten an Anglo-Japanese musical with a too dogged decency of purpose

This musical has arrived in London in rather the way its title suggests, with refreshingly little hype and public relations ado. It turns out to be a sombre, earnest but determinedly upbeat tale of love and loss set in the Nagasaki of the 1940s and the Boston of 1970. No wonder some in the trade are reportedly calling it "into the red". For all its virtues, the chances of *Out of the Blue* filling the enormous Shaftesbury Theatre for enough weeks to make its producers money are not good.

The sung-through score is by Shun-ichi Tokura, who has won dozens of awards and sold millions of records in his native Japan. The libretto is by our own Paul Sand, who endearingly describes himself in the programme as "a dumpy-looking old hippie". Their joint chimes and rhymes, though lacking in texture

and surprise, would not disgrace some better-known pairings. Indeed, one song verges on the beautiful. The trouble with their show is what also makes it admirable, its unyielding decency of purpose.

Does that sound cynical? Let me briefly talk you through David Gilmore's production. The stage is stark and dark, the chorus dressed in black Japanese robes. So grim is the general look that the mildest attempt to brighten it — vague shadows of trees on murky pink-green slats, say — comes across as a wild riot of colour. The very *mise-en-scène* suggests a dogged integrity, as does all that follows.

A Boston priest, James Graeme's

Out of the Blue
Shaftesbury

Father Marshall, spends the first act uneasily preparing to meet a Japanese doctor, Michael McCarthy's Akizuki. Why? The answer comes in the flashbacks that occur between the two men's anguished throbbings and the chorus's sepulchral chants of "Kyrie eleison" and so on. Young Marshall (Greg Ellis), a prisoner of war in 1945, married a girl called Hideko (Meredith Braun), who died of radiation sickness in Akizuki's hospital after giving birth to a daughter, who herself then supposed-

ly succumbed to the same disease.

Next comes the big surprise. Hideko's brother — coincidentally, the mildly murderous commandant of the very camp in which Marshall was held — has lied about the little girl's death and kept her for himself. Actually, she is now one of Akizuki's nurses. This plunges us into more flashback, some of it quite preposterous. I had better not reveal any of the play's other secrets, but I cannot help asking this. Suppose you are a highly educated nurse. Your mother died in a mercy-killing and your father served time for agreeing to put her out of her misery. Would you really have discovered absolutely nothing about either event?

Oh well, this is 1970s Japan, where unquestioning acceptance was probably expected of women. In any case, the authors are more concerned with the higher capacities of the human spirit than with the mundane workings of the human mind. The final chorus, which repeats Hideko's soaring valedictory almost word for word, sums up their message: "Looking to the future, we can achieve, everything we dream of, only believe."

Believe what? Presumably in reconciliation, since that is what we get at the end: daughter, priest, ex-commandant and all. Also in the peace and nuclear disarmament which the current Mayor of Nagasaki espouses in an eloquent programme note. Myself, I am glad to concur with all such views. I just wish the show putting them over were a bit less sententious and a mite more real.

Small is beautiful in the new world

DANCE: Debra Craine welcomes the launch of Richard Alston's new company in its first London season

This autumn we are witnessing the biggest re-write in the story of British contemporary dance for decades. The country's two leading companies are no longer recognisable, such has been the desire to redefine their roles. Last month Rambert Dance Company showed us how it is proceeding along the path of *aggrandisement* — a bigger company, a bigger budget — under its ambitious new director, Christopher Bruce. This month we see an organisation take the opposite course, with the launch of Richard Alston Dance Company, a small-scale troupe formed from the ashes of what was London Contemporary Dance Theatre. The fact that this new outfit is led by Bruce's sacked predecessor highlights just how far apart the two former rivals have grown.

Alston's new job is to revitalise the artistic heart of The Place, London home of the Contemporary Dance Trust, the umbrella body that embraced LDCOT for a quarter of a century before a leadership crisis resulted in the company's demise. If Alston's inaugural London programme is setting the standard for years to come, then life at The Place is looking very healthy indeed.

There are four new works on offer at The Place, all of them by Alston, and all revealing a choreographer re-acquainting himself with his enormous talent for making intimate dances.

Movements from Petrushka sees Alston back on excellent form, inspired by the image of Nijinsky as the dysfunctional puppet forever excluded from the society he inhabits. Here the lead is danced by Darshan Singh Bhuller, a charismatic performer whose power and intensity lend a frightening weight to the desperate angularity and uncluttered abstraction of the choreography. Around him four couples are lost in playful interaction, their big jumps highlighting

their blindness to Petrushka/Nijinsky's suffering. Here, as everywhere, the nine dancers are superb. *Shadow Realm*, set to Simon Holt's score for clarinet, cello and harp, allows Alston to reach for more elusive imagery. Leesa Phillips and Henri Oguike, their bodies heavy with a shared fear of the unknown, move in lazy, supported couplings. *Lachrymae*, Brinen's 1950 work, gives six dancers the starting point for feelings of fatigue, anger and



Mysterious: Leesa Phillips and Henri Oguike in *Shadow Realm*

sadness. It's all there in the choreography: a drooping shoulder, an outstretched hand, a slow curling of the body into the fetal position, a head thrown back in defiance.

That is why Alston is so important to our dance culture — someone who believes in the primacy of the body in motion, a bulwark against the onslaught of cheap European theatrics. And if anyone should doubt his credentials as an entertainer, check out *Something in the City*, which brings the programme to a close in punchy, propulsive fashion as Alston indulges his delight in beautifully honed physicality. This man is just full of movement.

No small beer in the Pinter pot

Landscape
Cottesloe

NOBODY comes. Nobody goes. Nobody even stands up from the kitchen table, although Duff (Ian Holm) rests his elbows upon it, cradles a mug of tea in his hands and turns his head. At the other end of the table Beth (Penelope Wilton) never shifts her position at all. She stares into the middle distance of her past, remembering a day at the beach, in the sand dunes with her man — "my man," she calls him, tenderly — and twice the grave expression on her face relaxes into a smile of bewitching happiness.

She is recalling the moment when she asked her man if he would like a child. "Our own child? Would you like that?" She does not give his answer. Is the man Duff? Possibly. But there is no knowing for certain. We cannot even tell whether that treasured afternoon among the dunes is memory or wish.

Pinter wrote *Landscape* in 1967, near the end of a prolific decade that concluded with the full-length play *Old Times*, where again there is unresolved uncertainty about a profoundly important encounter. But in *Landscape* there is no argument over conflicting memories. Duff cannot hear what Beth is saying, and she is not listening to him.

Where his words take the form of an exterior monologue, trying to reach into her locked mind, her monologue never stirs outside it. His banal details of the day just past, the downpour of rain, their vanished dog, a dispute at the pub over piss-poor beer, all these minutiae batter in vain against the richness of her memory, or desire. Under Pinter's own direction the two voices flow alongside each other like pearls and bullets —



Ian Holm and Penelope Wilton in *Landscape*

already, or enough for Pinter's purpose. They offer themselves as possibilities, but a full picture is not to be known. For at this period of Pinter's career, the tensions in his art played upon our old longing for certainty, teased us with the hope that it might arrive round the next bend in the dialogue, and ended with the inference that certainties are not to be had.

Even the disputed beer may have been drinkable.

JEREMY KINGSTON

MUSIC: Polished sounds from Vienna; and a fine Royal Concert

Outside the Austrian capital the Vienna Philharmonic tends to work in threes. Each year it makes three mini-tours visiting three cities: London, Berlin and Paris. For the opening concert of the third of the London seasons it lost its chosen conductor, Carlo Maria Giulini, through ill health. Fortunately, the pull of the Vienna Phil is such that it could persuade James Levine to spend a night or two away from the Met and appear in his place. Levine obliged by keeping intact the very Giulini-esque programme: Schubert's "Unfinished" and Brahms's Symphony No 4.

Levine's association with the orchestra goes back a long way at the Salzburg Festival. But in London he is a rare visitor and his reception both before and after the Schubert was no more than respectful. The "Unfinished" was given

Smooth baton change

VPO/Levine
Festival Hall

full weight, with the first movement packed with feeling that was by turns gloomy and apprehensive. The second was made as stately and smooth as a parade of Lipizzaner horses. Levine never lets the joins in the orchestra show, a small fluff from the horns apart. Everything is sewn together so that the seams never appear.

If the Schubert showed the Vienna Philharmonic as the

highly polished entity the world knows it to be, the Brahms displayed its virtuosity. Levine has recently acquired a reputation for favouring slow tempi, but all this was thrown away in a gloriously muscular performance. There was a rare moment of imperfection from the strings in the first movement but once this was over there was stirring playing.

The third movement had a celebratory air, light-footed and secure. Before the blaze of the finale, Levine faced the audience at the end looking like a more than usually dishevelled Danny Baker, but knowing that he had done a very good job. As one of the encores the Vienna Phil dashed into a Brahms Hungarian Dance, indicating that it is also a band which can delight in simply showing off.

JOHN HIGGINS

Good cause for two-timing

OAE/CBSO/Rattle
Barbican/Radio 3

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This was the annual St Cecilia's Day Royal Concert, and Simon Rattle ensured that not a moment of the evening's proceedings would be taken for granted. Not even the OAE gave in Thomas Arne's graciously decorative version.

This fine-tuned the ears for the short movements and

briefly inhabited moods of Corelli's Concerto Grosso in F, Op 6 No 2. Its two violins and cello soloists made demure chamber music, while Rattle took an impish delight in the sudden change of direction of a rhythmic sequence here, a dynamic colour there.

It was a revelation to hear Tippet's response to this work in such close juxtaposition to it. The *Fantasia Concertante* on a Theme of Corelli rippled with the excitement of rediscovery in the hands of the CBSO and Rattle. As fields of movement shifted and crisscrossed, orchestral textures were kept lithe and transparent.

HILARY FINCH

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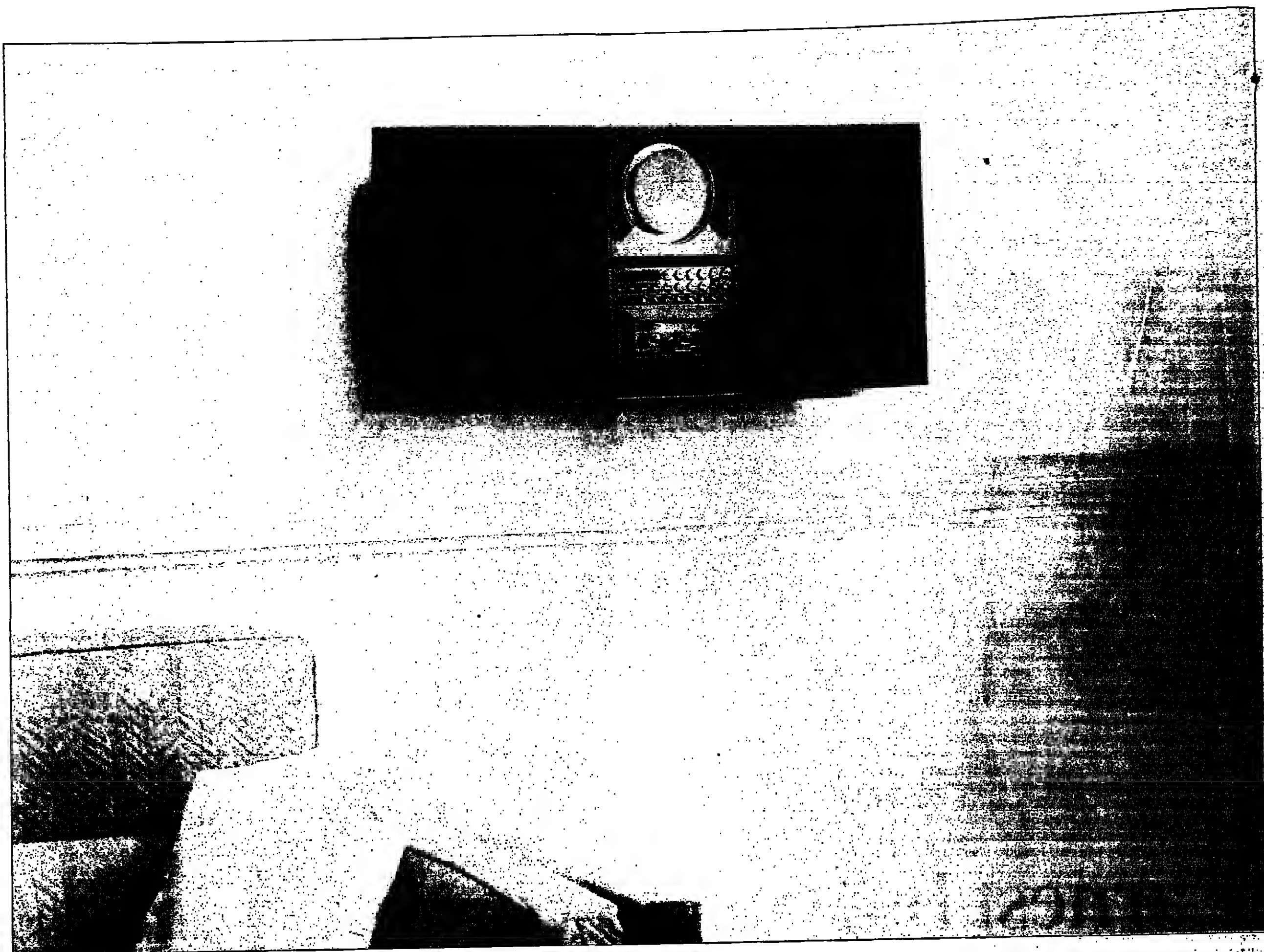
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NEW POP ALBUMS: David Sinclair tunes in to the Vedder forecast; Prince misses the bus

Eddie and the hot rods

PEARL JAM
Vitalogy (Epic 47861)
SINGER and lyricist Eddie Vedder may have lost (in hideous circumstances) his rather childish competition with Kurt Cobain for the unofficial title of Most Alienated Rock Star of the 1990s, but he is not going to let matters rest there.

Leading Pearl Jam swiftly back into the fray, he stirs up a hornets' nest of emotions with a succession of furiously exaggerated performances on *Vitalogy*. "This is not for you," he shrieks again and again during the climax of "Not For You," a rant against celebrity hangers-on that ought to deter even the most tenacious autograph hunter from troubling him again.

His anger is contagious, and on numbers such as "Corduroy," "Satan's Bed," "Last Exit" and "Whipping," the rest of the group perform with a tightly focused, whirlwind energy that does not sound that far removed from the iconoclasm of new American punk acts such as Green Day and Offspring.

Fastest and punkiest of all is the extraordinary hit single in praise of vinyl records, "Spin The Black Circle," and, to emphasise the point, Pearl Jam have decreed that *Vitalogy* will initially be released only on vinyl (cassette and CD versions will be available from Thursday).

The gentler songs — "Nothingman," "Better Man" and an affecting memorial to Cobain called "Immortality" — offer an enjoyable if more predictable contrast. But these are offset in turn by several unexpected left-field turns, including the Tom Waits-inspired "Bugs," wherein Vedder accompanies himself on a dilapidated sounding accordion, and "Hey Foxxy Dancer," a raucous stretch of random noise.

Nevertheless, *Vitalogy* is a supremely alert and vigorous album by a band whose authenticity has been called into question more often than seems fair. Vedder can be accused of many faults — neurotic insecurity, lack of humour, rampant egotism and more — but, after this display, the burning sense of mission he and Pearl Jam bring to their music can no longer be in doubt. As a creative force it is grumpy which is dead. With this album Pearl Jam have left the corpse far behind.

PRINCE
The Black Album
(Warrner Bros. 9362-45793)
MYSTERIOUSLY withdrawn from circulation just days before it was

scheduled for release in 1987, *The Black Album* has, until now, only been available as a rare and expensive bootleg. Its absence from record store racks has fuelled the album's notoriety as a hardcore, erotic extravaganza, an X-rated side of Prince deemed too extreme for public consumption.

But although ahead of its time in 1987, *The Black Album* has been overtaken by subsequent developments. The language is indeed rough and risqué in places. But the violent narrative and undetected expletives of "Bob George" now sound tame compared to the excesses of modern gangsta rap. As for the (muffled) salacious ramblings of "Superfunkyscithrapsy," a "Rockhard In A Funky Place," Prince has outdone them himself, with wearying frequency, on subsequent releases.

Take away the controversy surrounding *The Black Album*, and there is not a great deal to get excited about. Seven of the eight tracks are party-a-go-go, disco-funk grooves of the sort that Prince now turns out by the yard, while the other — "When 2 R In Love" — is a typical, squeaky ballad. The songs have more atmosphere than substance, while the production lacks the wallop in the bottom end that you would expect to hear on a 1994 album.

Prince is renowned for his rapid recording rate, but this of his sound more like work in progress than even the roughest of his other albums. One cannot help but wonder whether *The Black Album* was actually abandoned rather than withdrawn.

NEW ORDER
The Best Of New Order
(London 9285802)
AN album, "touched by the hand of pre-Christmas marketing," as a picture caption in *Mojo* magazine put it, *The Best Of New Order* duplicates half-a-dozen of the songs on the *Substance* compilation (reissued only last year) and focuses on the group's more recent successes at the expense of several classic tracks from 1981 to 1986 ("Temptation" and "Confusion" are prominent absences).

On the positive side, "True Faith," "Bizarre Love Triangle," "1993" and "Round & Round" have all been (subtly) remixed by Stephen Hague, who coaxed such sterling results from the band on last year's *Republic*. And there is little to gainsay the sleek excellence of a 16-track CD, crammed with songs of the calibre of "Blue Monday," "Touché By The Hand Of God" and "World In Motion".



Pearl Jam: stirring up a hornets' nest of emotions and contagious anger with a succession of furiously exaggerated performances

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|----|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Cross Road — The Best Of | Bon Jovi (Jambou) |
| 2 | Carry On Up The Charts: The Best Of | Beautiful South (Go! Discs) |
| 3 | Fields Of Gold: The Best Of 1984-94 | Sing (A&M) |
| 4 | The Best Of New Order | New Order (London) |
| 5 | Bizarre Fruit | M People (Disconation) |
| 6 | Unplugged In New York | U2 (RCA) |
| 7 | Big Ones | Aerosmith (Geffen) |
| 8 | Unplugged In New York | Nirvana (Geffen) |
| 9 | The Greatest Hits | INXS (Mercury) |
| 10 | Always And Forever | Eternal (EMI) |

Compiled by MJB

LONDON

WHAT'S ON AT THE BARBICAN: Ian Judge launches the Barbican's festive season tomorrow night with John Mortimer's new version of *Dickens's A Christmas Carol*. Meanwhile, Sir Colin Davis directs the orchestra with two LSO concert performances of *Admetus* — the great passionate story from classical Greece, written when Mozart was just 24 years old. Over in the P, New England, the TSO's sixth Richard Nelson production, a new production, *Barbican*, 54 St. Street, EC2 (071-438 6881).

WHAT'S ON IN COVENT GARDEN: There is great excitement about tonight's opening of *La Traviata* at the Opera House. Sir Georg Solti conducts and Richard Eyre directs his first opera. The scene changes tomorrow afternoon as the exquisite *Mykko* returns to the Royal Ballet debut in *The Sleeping Beauty*. Down the road at the Coliseum, the ENO gives further performances of *Anders on Naxos* and *The Magic Flute*.

WHAT'S ON AT THE SOUTH BANK: Theatre de Complicité returns for a "play" done as a series of musicals. Out of a house resided a man... uses writings from the Russian Absolutist, Daniel Kharms (Lytton). Michael Stern conducts the London Philharmonic tonight for another programme in the "Classics for Pressure" series and Franz Weber-Mos.

GRIMM TALES: *Hansel and Gretel* and *Iron Hans*, woven together with other tales recorded by the Brothers Grimm. Carol Ann Duffy (producer) and Tim Supple (director) adapt the pre-Victorian version of the tales and the grotesque costumes look terrific. Young Vic, 66 The Cut, SE1 (071-492 6363). Now previewing: opens Dec 7, 7pm (and Jan 21, 6pm).

HAMLET: Peter Hall directs Stephen Dillane's darkly humorous, self-deprecating Prince, backed by excellent playing from Michael Pennington, Donald Sinden and Alan Dobie. Old Vic, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (071-494 8000). Mon-Sat, 7.15pm; mat. Thurs and Sat, 3pm.

MISS JULIE: Acclaimed for his production of *A Doll's House* last winter, Sue Lutton now directs Strindberg's drama of lust and submission. Presented by Kaboodle. New End, 27 New End, Hampstead, NW3 (071-794 0022). Tue-Sat, 7.30pm; mat. Sun, 4.30pm. Under 12s Dec 11.

MOSCOW STATIONS: Tom Courtenay's one-man performance as an alcoholic lost on the Moscow Underground. You probably won't see him, more watching him being seen. Lush, Charing Cross Road, W2 (071-494 5055). Mon-Sat, 8pm.

OLIVER! Lavish Cameron Macintosh revival of the Bar musical. Jonathan Pryce plays Fagin, Sam Mendes directs. Palladium, Argyll St, W1 (071-494 5022). Now previewing: 7.30pm. Opens Dec 8, 7pm. Then Wed, 7.30pm; mat. Wed and Sat, 2.30pm.

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kris Anderson

It takes the podium on Sunday for a performance of Mozart's *Requiem* (Festival Hall). The Queen Elizabeth Hall plays host to pianist Richard Goode for more Beethoven on Sunday afternoon and the final concert of the international chamber musical season in the evening. While you are out and about, don't miss the annual Diageo exhibition of contemporary jewellers. Box Office: National (071-438 2252), RPH and GSH (0710-428 8800).

ELSEWHERE

GLASGOW: Jean-Yves Thibaudet plays St. Alexander Gibson and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra promote for a programme of Wagner, Liszt and Beethoven. On Sunday, the orchestra regroups for a music-theatre evening. *Eden of South Africa* is an RSO education project that includes Eugene Smet's commissioned *Spirit of the Drum* and the RSO's new production of *The Rite of Spring*. The RSO, Queen's Hall, 250 Whitehall, London (071-438 2252). Sat, 7.30pm. Ticket: Turner Price, £15.50. (071-438 2252). Sat, 7.30pm.

THEATRE GUIDE

January Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Some seats available

Seats at all prices

MY NIGHT WITH REG: John Sessions and David Bamber in Kevin Boyd's excellent, award-winning comedy with a dark edge. Reg and his wife caught up in a web of obsession and deception. Criterion, Piccadilly Circus, W1 (071-494 8000). Mon-Tue, Thurs-Sat, 8pm; Wed, 6.30pm and 8.15pm; mat. Sat, 4pm.

ON APPROVAL: Peter Hall gives us the London play as it was and is a sophisticated, over-the-top, satirical comedy. *On Approval* is a brilliant form, with Anne Carver, Louise Lombard and Simon Ward. New End, 27 New End, Hampstead, NW3 (071-794 0022). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat. Thurs and Sat, 3pm.

A PASSIONATE WOMAN: Ned Sherrin directs Stephen Cole in *Key* Melia's extraordinary, though light-hearted comedy, which is set on the roof and down the stairs of a grand house. Comedy, Pavilion Street, SW1 (071-368 1000). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat. Wed, 3pm and Sat, 4pm.

NEW RELEASES

CORRINA, CORRINA (PG): Household Words Goldeneye reveals a household number by girl, increasingly directed by Ray Latta and Tina Mayhew. Director, Jesse Nelson. MGM Home Video (071-498 1527). Odeon Kensington (0423 914988) UCI Whiteley (071-752 3333) Warner (071-437 4343).

DAYS OF BEING WILD (16): Wong Kar-wai's autobiographical portrait of a disaffected youth in a desolate Hong Kong of 1960. With Leslie Cheung and Maggie Cheung. ICA (071-430 2647).

DEAR DIARY (15): Delightful, irreverent film about a young Italian actor-director Nanni Moretti. Caravan West End (071-369 1272). Notting Hill Cinema (071-727 0705). Fenice (071-457 8402). Screen (071-435 3395).

A GOOD MAN IN AFRICA (15): Acclaimed version of William Boyd's comic novel about a young man's journey in West Africa. With Colin Firth and Sean Connery. Director, Bruce Beresford. MGM Home Video (071-370 2636). Theatrical (071-434 0031). Plaza (0800 888391).

INGLISHMAN RE THE CORNWALL (15): Irreverent addition to the Ingmar Bergman series about Christopher Lambert's wandering immortal. Arthur Morahan. MGM Home Video (071-434 0031). Odeon Kensington (0423 914988). Screen (0423 914988). UCI Whiteley (071-752 3333) Warner (071-437 4343).

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and where indicated with the symbol (P) on release across the country

THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS (PG): The King of Halloween on his late over Christmas. Technically brilliant puppet family conceived by Tim Burton, directed by Henry Selick. Odeon Kensington (0423 914988). Screen (0423 914988). UCI Whiteley (071-752 3333) Warner (071-437 4343).

STRAWBERRY AND CHOCOLATE (16): Shep and brilliant plot for tolerance, sexual and otherwise, from veteran Cuban director Tomás Gutiérrez Alea. Caravan Mayfield (071-369 1272).

ARHEADS (15): Anarchic, good-natured rock'n'roll comedy, with Steve Buscemi, Adam Sandler, Brendan Fraser and Jay McInerney. MGM Home Video (071-434 0031).

FLESH AND BONE (15): Lush, beautiful film about a young man's journey in West Africa. With Colin Firth and Sean Connery. Director, Bruce Beresford. MGM Home Video (071-370 2636). Theatrical (071-434 0031). Plaza (0800 888391).

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ENTERTAINMENTS

ART GALLERIES
BRITISH PRINTS 1920-70 to Dec 18. Thurs-Sat 11-6. BLOWN FINE ART, Unit 10, Canada Square, 2 Queens Rd, W1 (071-739 4988).

CARABET
THE GREEN ROOM
at the Old Royal London's Premier Club and Nightclub. The Bachelors. "ALIVE AND WELL" 22 November 1994. Reservations: BAR AND DANCING UNTIL 1AM. Tickets: £10.00. Tel: 071-437 5090.

CIRCUSES
THE CHINESE STATE CIRCUS
The Roundhouse, Camden NW1. Tue-Sat 8pm to Sat 8pm. Sun 10am to Sat 8pm. Tel: 071-262 0999 or Fax: 071-262 7200.

EVENTS
ON CORK STREET!
EUROPE'S LEADING ART STREET
26th & 27th NOVEMBER 1994
SATURDAY 10-6
SUNDAY 11-6
The 3rd Annual Open Weekend

POOLE AND SOUTHAMPTON

Richard Hickox conducts the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra for a double-bill this weekend. Hickox's *Beethoven's Ninth* opens the programme, followed by Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* for Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon and Horn and Brahms's *A German Requiem*. Merle McLaughlin and Thomas Allen are the soloists. Western Hall, Arts Centre, Kingsland Road, Poole (0202 885222). Tonight, 7.30pm; Northampton, CMC Centre, Southampton (0703 633001). Tomorrow, 7.30pm.

LEEDS: The Quarry opens its early bird Christmas show this weekend. Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound of Music* returns to the stage, with all the music we all secretly really do know. Quarry, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Hill Mount (0222 422111). Shows begin tomorrow, Sat, Dec 25, and Sun, Dec 26, and 28.

LONDON GALLERIES

Barbican: A Box of Tricks: Avant-Garde Art and the Great War (071-438 4141). **British Museum:** *Impressionism* (071-438 1559). **Hayward:** The Romantic Spirit in German Art 1790-1850 (071-438 3144). **National Gallery:** *Classical* (071-305 0055). **National Gallery:** The Young Michelangelo (071-305 0055). **Royal Academy:** The Glory of Venice (071-438 7438). **Tate:** Turner Price: *Impressionism* (071-438 7438). **V&A:** *Impressionism* (071-438 7438).

THE PRINCE OF MISS JEAN

BROOKLYN: Patricia Richardson's vocal prowess perfectly suits the role of Muriel Spark's reprobate but dangerous schoolteacher and wife. *Princess of Miss Jean Brodie* (071-438 7438).

THE SEABALL: Just Danes rules the road, heading a splendid cast in Sam Gamson's new version. *The Seaball* (071-438 7438).

A SPARKER IN THE WORKS: A coup for this outstanding theatre. The *Sparker* (071-438 7438).

THESE TALL WOMEN: Maggie Smith, Frances de la Tour and Annette Bening in a hilarious comedy. *These Tall Women* (071-438 7438).

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POP: A spellbinding ear-bashing from Goldilocks

Cyndi Lauper

Shepherd's Bush Empire

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Portents look promising for an unlikely central alliance



Taylor: breaks tradition

Mark Taylor, of Pontypool, plays in the centre for Wales tomorrow ... there we should pause, for there can hardly be, in a rugby sense, a more acute oxymoron. A centre three-quarter ... playing for Wales ... from Pontypool?

Such an unlikely alliance must perplex as much the population of the small Gwent town as elsewhere. In turning back the calendar and puffing their chests — with very good reason — Pontypool have always understood their reputation to be for breeding men of grit, gristle and an indestructible mental core to survive among the instruments of darkness in the scrum and not in the openness of midfield. You may be disposed to think there cannot be stranger happenings. If, once upon a time, their distinctive forwards formed more

than half the Welsh pack, the anonymity of their three-quarter line was so well preserved, on the other hand, that it was a place where, Lord Lucan-like, it was joked, men were capable of disappearing without trace for seasons. So, with unnatural reversals, who is to say now that the birds of the night may yet be heard at noonday upon Pontypool's market place. Breaking a tradition that last saw the club have one of their three-quarters represent Wales — Malcolm Price, against England in 1962 — Taylor wins his first cap against South Africa at Cardiff Arms Park tomorrow. Nowadays, clearly, there is light as well as shade in Pontypool.

There is nothing soft about Taylor. His pedigree insists that he should not be so. His father, Ivor, stocky, all shoulders and arms it



GERALD DAVIES

Rugby Commentary

always seemed, was a fearsome, man-and-ball, head-on, first-time tackler for Newport and Pontypool in the Seventies.

It is a gratifying, though unsettling, phenomenon to see sons follow so unerringly and, dare I say, for those of us of a certain age, so unseemly soon in their father's footsteps. As with Scott Quinell last season, so with Mark Taylor now. It is not so much that they should want to take up rugby — this is Wales, after all — but that they should also occupy the same

position their fathers once did. Mark Taylor, like all sons, is made aware by others of the shadow his father casts. "If you tackle like your old man," he is reminded in Aberavon, say, where, at 18 years of age, he first played for Pontypool in April 1991, or Swansea, his first league fixture the following season, "you cannot go very far wrong."

A product of Abersychan Comprehensive School, he played on the wing for Wales Under-21 against the touring New Zealand develop-

ment side. Changing to his present position, he has played four more times for them.

He, at 6ft 1in and just over 14st, is more than a stout defender. He is a delightful runner, as he showed with the Barbarians against Newport this autumn.

"I loved playing for them," he said. "There was so much opportunity, which you don't often get, to run into the gaps. I love testing the opposition." His talent, according to Jeff Young, the coaching director of the Welsh Rugby Union, who had seen him earlier, "shone like a beacon".

Several of Taylor's arcing runs that night epitomised the classical centre's outside break, so rarely seen these days; after which he was chosen for the Wales A team to play South Africa. Twice against them, too, he displayed his running gifts. "My game has developed

because of the people at my club," he said. "When you are encouraged by John Perkins and Bobby Windsor, both former Pontypool and Wales players, you have to listen because they have been there and they know what play at this level is like. If Bob Dawkins, the backs' coach, has introduced variety and speed into the training and got rid of the old-style Pontypool way of running around the pitch and up slopes, then Mark King, the former international centre now stand-off half, has given an awareness of skilful passing."

His father played for Newport against the last South African touring team, in 1969 ... and he was on the winning side. Newport won 11-6. It would be a fine thing indeed if he were to add to the Taylor family collection of Spring-bok heads.

Morgan cannot hold back Hendry

By PHIL YATES

STEPHEN Hendry wasted little time in bringing the guillotine down on Darren Morgan in the quarter-finals of the Royal Liver Assurance United Kingdom snooker championship with a 9-3 victory at Preston Guild Hall yesterday.

Morgan's head was on the block when he trailed 6-2 following the opening session. Hendry won the first two frames on the resumption unspectacularly to lead 8-2 and, although Morgan supplied a measure of resistance by winning the next frame, the Scot's progress was assured with a 93 break in the twelfth.

Having advanced with such ease, Hendry, who will meet Peter Ebdon or Dave Harold tomorrow, is increasingly confident that he will justify his status as clear favourite. "I'm hitting the ball nicely and I feel as if I am getting stronger with every match," Hendry, the 1989 and 1990 United Kingdom champion, said.

While Morgan attempted to apportion the blame for his ninth defeat in ten meetings by the world champion on Hendry's good fortune, it was an excuse that did not hold water. Hendry's long potting was incisive, his break-building more than adequate and his safety showed patience.

Like most of his fellow players, however, Hendry treated Ronnie O'Sullivan's declaration on Wednesday night that he is contemplating retirement with incredulity. O'Sullivan, whose reign as champion had been ended by a 9-7 defeat at the hands of Ken Doherty, claimed this might be his "last season as a professional".

"I think it's the first time Ronnie's gone through a bad patch and he doesn't know how to deal with it," Hendry, beaten 10-6 by O'Sullivan in the final of the championship last year, said.

It would be easy to condemn O'Sullivan for the way he handled his elimination, but

his comments were not simply those of a sour loser, issued in the heat of the moment. On the table, he has encountered far more highs than lows during his brief professional career, but serious family problems seem to have proved an emotional wrench.

Shortly after completing a mammoth commitment at the summer qualifying school of 1992, when, remarkably, he won 74 of his first 76 matches as a professional, O'Sullivan was shattered by his father being sentenced to life imprisonment for murder.

O'Sullivan has found it difficult to come to terms with the incarceration of someone who, throughout his phenomenally successful junior and amateur days, had been a virtually constant companion.

After becoming, one week short of his eighteenth birthday, the youngest winner of a ranking tournament here last year, O'Sullivan kept a promise by visiting his father in prison the following day, with the trophy in tow.

One cannot help but wonder if, by trying so hard to make his father's prison term more bearable with tournament success, O'Sullivan has created an extra burden of pressure he is unable to carry. If this were not turmoil enough, O'Sullivan's mother is also facing charges for alleged VAT offences.

One only has to survey O'Sullivan's impressive record, however, to realise that he may simply have fallen into the trap of expecting too much. In addition to his United Kingdom championship triumph, he also won the British Open last season, was runner-up in the European Open and ended the campaign ninth in the world rankings.

With reflection, O'Sullivan will surely come to appreciate that he has been guilty of over-reaction on a grand scale.

QUARTER-FINALS: Ronnie O'Sullivan (200) beat Darren Morgan (100) 9-3. Latest positions: J. Williams (1st), J. Parnell (2nd), J. Higgins (3rd).

Weight of task leaves Pienaar strong

David Hands on how the South Africa captain has flourished with his country's renaissance

During the journey from King's Park, Durban, to the Arms Park, Cardiff, Francois Pienaar has packed a generation's experience into a mere 17 months. It has opened his eyes, and those of all his South African playing colleagues, to the world of international rugby and, significantly, Pienaar is still smiling.

You could excuse Pienaar were his blood, aquiline features drawn and haggard. Captaining South Africa at rugby union has never been a bed of roses, so great is the expectation upon the individual concerned. He followed one of his country's legends, Naas Botha, into the role, he lost his first two international series and, twice within eight months, he wondered whether his tenure might be over.

Yet when he leads out South Africa against Wales tomorrow, for their ninth and last international of the year, Pienaar must surely believe that, for the next six months at least, his position is secure. Quite apart from his ability as a player, the positive image he has offered of South African rugby in Australia, New Zealand and now Britain has been a constant balance to the sometimes malevolent publicity that has resulted from successive acts of violence headlined around the world.

Pienaar's smile is genuine enough: he is a perceptive man, exploring a new, though not always brave, world of rugby and learning as fast as he can, but behind those clear, blue eyes lies the ferocious competitor that any man picked by South Africa must be. Not for nothing did Transvaal, under his leadership, collect every domestic trophy available in 1993 and, like so many young players of drive and ambition, he is establishing a career on the back of his chosen sport.

Pienaar, 27, is the oldest of four brothers, whose family home is in Witbank, an hour's drive east of Johannesburg. He studied law at university, but then went into business, which, though he has been unable to offer a hands-on approach after a year of virtually non-stop rugby,



Pienaar leads South Africa against Wales tomorrow confident his captaincy is secure

should only gain from his vastly-enhanced public profile.

"You have to handle that carefully, otherwise your feet will leave the ground and you will lose touch with your roots," Pienaar said. There is no danger, though, of the back-row forward forgetting

his entry into international rugby at King's Park against the French last year, nominated as captain by the then new coach, Ian McIntosh, it was also his first appearance in the famous green and gold.

"It was a frightful experience," he said. "I was running on to the field scared, not

wanting to disappoint as a player and scared of not making the right decisions. There was a tremendous amount of pressure, but I've grown and I've learned a lot from it."

Compare and contrast the Pienaar of June 1993 with the man who confidently pulled

the strings against Scotland at Murrayfield last Saturday and will hope to do so again tomorrow.

"We have grown as players," he said. "Everything comes with experience — confidence, success and the determined application that ensures a successful tour." Particularly determined by such players as Joubert, Kruger and Strauß, who might have thought international rugby had passed them by but are now perceived as the core of the World Cup party next year.

However, Pienaar still looks forward to a day when the leading players are permitted to offer their perspective on a game grappling to come to terms with a semi-professional future. "We feel that, after our tour, there should be a questionnaire regarding all aspects of playing the game for the players to complete," Pienaar said. "I think that should happen all over the world. Rugby players should be represented on the

'Behind the clear blue eyes lies a ferocious competitor'

international board when decisions are made regarding the rules of the game.

"A lot of administrators have played the game, but it's changed and is changing every year. I think the views of the players are essential. I don't say the players should vote, but they should be allowed to get their views across. We should be moving the game towards where the players would like it to be."

"This year has been tough. We started in March and we finish on December 3. That's a year of rugby. It's an amateur game played by professionals, but for all that it's still a privilege for people to experience what we are experiencing. I don't think a lot of people in their lifetime will do this and get such a broad perspective on the game. There are things you get annoyed with, but it's fun to exercise a God-given talent for which we are all grateful."

Rugby as fun. Now there's a thought.

Australia likely to enter best bid for Davies

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

JONATHAN Davies had let it be known that he fancied ending his rugby league career in Australia before the try for Great Britain at Wembley last month that transformed interest in him into a positive clamour.

Several offers to play in the Winfield Cup have been put to Davies, 32, although nothing has been agreed formally. Warrington have not given up hope of keeping the Welshman after discussions with him yesterday, but the money being talked of in Australia is probably out of the club's range.

Peter Higham, the Warrington chairman, said yesterday: "Jonathan has assured us he hasn't signed any deal to go to Australia. The ball is in our court and we will make every effort to keep him although we don't have unlimited funds."

Canberra and Cronulla have declared their interest, but there was a denial yesterday by North Queensland Cowboys that Davies, whose £75,000 annual contract at Warrington expires at the end of this season, had been recruited on a £185,000 deal over 18 months.

Davies, whose alternative is a short-term contract in Australia next summer — he enjoyed a successful stint with Canterbury-Bankstown in 1991 — said: "I have talked with several Aussie clubs, but I remain contracted to Warrington and my first priority is to them."

As he would command a £70,000 international transfer fee, there is the attraction to Warrington of selling a player with only a short time in the game remaining. Balanced against this, however, is the box office appeal of someone who has revitalised playing fortunes at the club.

Should Davies move, Wales would almost certainly seek special dispensation to recall him for the World Cup in October next year. With the continued asset-stripping of players by Australian league clubs, the continued policy of omitting those players from international selection would be unrivalled.

Dennis Betts, the British second-row forward, is to join Andy Platt at Auckland Warriors next May, and Phil Clarke, his Wigan colleague and the target of several clubs, is being strongly linked to a long-term deal with Sydney Eastern Suburbs.

Halifax, who have lost only once at home, will move up to fourth place in the Stages Bitter Championship tonight should they avenge an earlier league defeat by Widnes, whose last win at Thrum Hall was during their 1987-88 championship-winning season.

However, Steve Simms, the Halifax coach, was taking nothing for granted yesterday. "Although Widnes have had their troubles over the last few months, because they have been forced to sell many of their players to survive, they still have enough players to field a good side."

With three specialist full backs injured, Simms calls upon the former St Helens utility back, Mark Bailey-Simon Baldwin, a new signing from Leigh, will partner Phil Moriarty in the second row.

Widnes, tenth in the league, are unlikely to field Adrian Hadley and Chris Smith, who have thigh strains, while the winger, Jason Grant, has a knee problem. Paul Hodge could return after a hand injury.

CJ Alan Hunt, the St Helens and Great Britain wing, will be out for at least a month after damaging his hamstring in the international against Australia at Wembley Road on Sunday.

THE TIMES Win a holiday cottage in Brittany



The Times, in association with Jannau Armagnac and The Sunday Times, offers you the chance to savour the real France.

We are offering readers the chance to win a dream holiday cottage in picturesque northern Brittany and a free cross-Channel passage with Stena Sealink Line every month for one year.

A further 20 runners-up will each receive a Half-Price France Gold Card which allows the winner and a partner to enjoy half-price accommodation in a range of three and four-star hotels throughout France.

HOW TO ENTER

QUESTION FOUR

For your chance to win a holiday cottage, answer the five questions which are appearing this week. Question four appears today. Keep a note of your answers and see both The Times and The Sunday Times at the weekend for details of how to enter and the full terms and conditions.

Who was the 'fourth' Musketeer?



JANNEAU

Autissier will not be tempted to take risks

FROM BARRY PICKTHALL IN CAPE TOWN

ISABELLE Autissier, of France, is the most relaxed of the 16 skippers who set out from Cape Town tomorrow bound for Australia on the second stage of the BOC challenge solo round-the-world yacht race.

Her 5½-day lead over Steve Pettengill, of the United States, should, barring accidents, be enough for her to continue dominating the men for the 20,000 miles that remain back to Charleston, South Carolina.

"I would still like to be a winner in Australia, but I do not have to take the risks others will undoubtedly be taking on this next stage to Sydney," Autissier, 38, said yesterday. "It is when you are taking risks in the Southern Ocean that the real dangers emerge."

She knows better than most the risks involved. During the last race, four years ago, Autissier's yacht was 600 miles from the finish line. As a result, she finished a seventh overall.

Steve Pettengill, sailing the five-year-old American 60-footer, Hunter's Child, proved something of a dark horse during the initial 6,800-mile transatlantic leg. He pulled through from fifth to second during his last week at sea, displacing Christophe Auguin, a former winner, and his French compatriot, Jean-Luc van den Heede, who trail a further two days astern.

"Isabelle's lead is going to be very difficult to overcome," Auguin, who began his race as the firm favourite,

said this week. "She has a fast boat and no longer needs to push as hard as the rest of us."

The first part of this leg will be a rush southwards from the Cape of Good Hope to hook up with a fierce storm sweeping in from the west, which should push the leaders through the Roaring Forties and Screaming Fifties latitudes at record speeds during the first two weeks.

Autissier said that the superior weather knowledge that gave her so many breaks during the tricky first leg will not be of much benefit until they reach the high pressure system off South Australia.

"The first two weeks will be hard sailing, but it will only be when we have to decide whether to sail round Tasmania or cut through Bass Strait will tactics come into play," she said. However, this week, John Martin, the South African expert who won this Australian leg four years ago, sailed with Autissier on a practice down to Cape Point to give her the benefit of his local expertise.

His knowledge of the Cape coast helped him to set a 26-day record for the voyage to Sydney. "I think we should finish within 25 days — we certainly won't be at sea longer than 30 days," Autissier said. That, of course, does not include the tail-enders like Harry Mitchell, of Great Britain, who is expected to reach Cape Town tomorrow. He is expected to take a seven-day break before re-starting.

Norman fails to shine as he ponders price of fame

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES IN SYDNEY

IT IS the dream of every youngster beating balls on the golf practice ground to win the Open, to make millions and become a superstar. Ited everywhere, with the Ferrari, the yacht, the plane, the television commercials — and the loneliness.

Greg Norman, tall and brimming with vitality, even now that he is coming up to 40 this birthday is in February, is the archetypal sporting superstar, but, at the Heineken Australian Open at Royal Sydney yesterday, after a first round of 74 that earned no glittering prizes, he conceded that there were also dark tinges to the apparently rosy glow.

"I've got a great life," he said, "but it can be lonely. When I go fishing and diving, it's usually on my own. But successful people often have that problem. Go ask Kerry Packer. It's part of the deal."

Norman, a born show-off — outgoing, flashy — was well named; he is gregarious by nature. These days, however, although he is the centre of attention, most of it is superficial. "I've never really developed any true friendships in America," he said. "There's nobody I can have a beer with and talk about nothing. I left all my real friends here in Australia."

He has plenty of critics here, too, but whatever he does is noteworthy and, as the day wore on and the wind got up, it became apparent that his round, redeemed slightly by a birdie three from eight feet at the last, was no cause

for panic. It left him six shots behind Matthew King, a fellow Queensland, who had to qualify for the championship and has been coping with the lack of fame and fortune that come to one languishing in 69th spot on the Australian order of merit.

King led by a shot from his compatriots, Brett Ogle and David Brandson, with Craig Parry, Brad Faxon, the defending champion, and Peter Baker, the best of the British, in the leading group on 70.

"It hurts coming down here and not playing good," Norman, who for the last month has been too busy with his world tour plans to practise, said. "I'm going to try and shoot in the 60s in the second round." Then he was gone, not to the practice ground but to his helicopter, to make the short hop to the business.

The business? To check the new £1 million boat he is having built. Jack Nicklaus, his neighbour in Florida, with whom he has a friendly but intense, bigger-better-best rivalry, has an 85-footer; it is certain that Norman's will be no less than 90ft.

FIRST ROUND (Australia unless stated): 68: M King (GB), S Ogle (AUS), D Brandson (AUS), P Baker (AUS), J Van de Velde (F), W Brady (AUS), J Woodland (AUS), P Mackenzie (AUS), C Gray (AUS), A Sobel (AUS), J Spencer (AUS), P Fowler (AUS), T Price (AUS), S Bowyer (AUS), D Fordon (AUS), A Cabani (AUS), 72: D MacAusland (AUS), P Tarran (AUS), G Joyce (AUS), I Parsons (AUS), D Eddy (AUS), G O'Connell (AUS), G O'Connell (AUS), 73: C Van der Velde (F), M Springer (AUS), G Wells (AUS), G Moorhead (AUS), P Dewhurst (AUS), R Gossard (AUS), P Fulle (AUS), W Ray (AUS), 74: B Black (AUS), E Bost (AUS), G Norman (AUS), M Calzaghe (AUS), Kyt Hae Hui (AUS), S Owen (AUS), 75: Baker-Finch (AUS), L Long (AUS), T Harrison (AUS).

In a bygone era of uncovered pitches, a drying wicket mocked the batsman's art

Black Monday when carnage came to the Gabba



As the first Test match opens in Brisbane, John Woodcock recalls a remarkable day 44 years ago

I was on the Woolloongabba ground at Brisbane 44 years ago that cricket's last pitched battle took place. It was Armageddon. The field was strewn with bodies, the result a travesty.

The occasion was the first Test match of the MCC tour of 1950-51. As was then the custom, we had sailed out to Australia and worked our way round the crescent from Perth to Brisbane, meeting the people and playing against each state in turn, as well as two or three matches up-country. It was all very different from today's mad, helmeted, commercialised rush — and vastly more agreeable.

MCC's only first-class victory before the first Test had come in a run-chase against South Australia at Adelaide and, when Lindsay Hassett and Freddie Brown went out for the toss at the Gabba on December 1, 1950, England were given even less chance than they are on the same ground now of running Australia close.

In the press box was a wealth of talent: Bill O'Reilly and Clarrie Grimmett (they always sat next to each other), Bill Bowes, Arthur Gilligan, Harold Larwood, Arthur Mailey, Sid Barnes (Australia's Artful Dodger), Vic Richardson and Bert Oldfield made an illustrious eight-some of former players. Neville Cardus, Jack Fingleton, Raymond Robertson-Glasgow and Jim Swanton, perhaps the ultimate foursome of cricket writers.

To everyone's surprise,

Australia were bowled out on the first day, on a good pitch, for 228. That was Friday. On the Saturday, heavy rain prevented any play. The nub of this story is that in those days, once a match had started, pitches were left uncovered and batted on a drying pitch in Australia was a more or less hopeless task. The sabbath being still sacrosanct, there was no play on the Sunday, which broke fine and warm — good drying weather. There was the usual Sunday golf, this time at Indooroopilly, with English eyes scanning the skies for fear of further rain.

I could take you now to the very place on the golf course where we first saw it coming, the great tropical storm that was to vent itself from four o'clock that afternoon until four o'clock on Monday morning and to settle England's fate. As the rain rattled down on Brisbane's old corrugated roofs, England's batsmen found sleep elusive.

Had there been any justice, there would have been no more play. That, though, would have denied us Monday's extraordinary cricket. Not the least remarkable thing about it was the ground that had been under water at dawn was made fit for the match to be resumed half an hour before lunch. The first ball of England's innings confirmed our worst fears. Bowled by Ray Lindwall, it flew over Reg Simpson's head after pitching somewhere near a length and taking a divot with it — and



Morris is well caught by Bailey off Bedser and Australia are 0 for two in their second innings in the 1950 Test match at the Gabba. Hassett declared the innings at 32 for seven to capitalise on the unplayable pitch

Simpson was a good 6ft tall. When bad light brought Monday's play to an end, nearly five hours later, 20 wickets had fallen for 130 runs. England had closed their first innings at 68 for seven, Australia their second at 32 for seven and England, batting again, were 30 for six, having been left 193 to win.

First Brown, then Hassett had declared, in order to

allow their bowlers a chance to exploit the pitch while it was still drying under the hot sun. The medium pace of Alec Bedser and Trevor Bailey for England and Bill Johnston for Australia, bowled to a full length, was devilish. Lindwall and Keith Miller were too fast to be effective. Lindwall bowling only one over in England's first innings and Miller turn-

ing at one time to off breaks round the wicket. The great Walter Hammond reckoned he never played a better innings than the 32 he made out of England's 76 for nine declared in similar conditions in the third Test match at Melbourne in 1936-37. At Brisbane, only when Len Hutton was just about the only big shots of the day and they gave him his only runs.

Between Hassett's declaration half an hour after tea and the start of England's second innings, the England captain went out to the middle to monitor the rolling of the pitch. The reason for this was that the heavy roller at the Gabba was drawn then by a horse, one that was specially shod for the purpose but which had to be taken out of the shafts every time it turned

SCOREBOARD A REMARKABLE MONDAY

AUSTRALIA: First Innings 228 (P N Harvey 74, A V Bedser 4 for 45)	
ENGLAND: First Innings 12	
R T Simpson b Johnston	12
C Westwood c Hassett b Johnston	18
T G Evans c Johnston b Johnston	18
O G S Compton c Lindwall b Johnston	18
J G Dwyer c Lenton b Miller	18
L Hutton not out	8
A J McInnes b Johnston	8
W R Brown c Taiton b Miller	8
T E Bailey not out	8
Extras (lb 2, nb 1)	1
Total (7 wickets)	68
A V Bedser and D V P Wright did not bat	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-28, 2-49, 3-62, 4-82, 5-86, 6-87, 7-87	
BOWLING: Lindwall 1-0-1-0; Johnston 11-2-35-5; Miller 10-1-29-4	
AUSTRALIA: Second Innings 0	
J McInnes b Bailey	0
A R Morris b Bailey	0
I W Johnston b Bailey	0
S Lenton c Bailey b Bedser	0
A J McInnes b Bailey	0
R H Harvey c Simpson b Bedser	12
K R Miller c Simpson b Bailey	12
R Lindwall not out	8
Extras (lb 1)	1
Total (6 wickets)	32
TD Taiton, W A Johnston and J Iverson did not bat	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-0, 2-0, 3-0, 4-12, 5-19, 6-31, 7-32	
BOWLING: Bailey 7-1-22-4; Bedser 8-5-29-3	
ENGLAND: Second Innings 0	
R T Simpson b Lindwall	0
C Westwood c Lenton b Lindwall	0
J G Dwyer b Miller	0
T E Bailey c Johnston b Iverson	7
A V Bedser c Harvey b Iverson	0
T G Evans not out	0
A J McInnes not out	0
Extras (lb 1)	1
Total (6 wickets)	7
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-0, 2-16, 3-22, 4-23, 5-23, 6-32	
BOWLING: Lindwall 5-3-11-2; Johnston 3-0-0-0; Miller 4-3-1-1; Iverson 3-1-9-2	
Umpires: A N Bell and H Eppinhurst	

round. This meant that by the time the statutory seven minutes allowed for rolling between innings elapsed, there had been no more than three or four minutes of actual rolling. As the only available means of smoothening the pitch, the roller was vital to England's chances and Freddie Brown made sure the horse did an extra couple of lengths.

But it was to no avail. Although the pitch noticeably tamed and England still had nine second-innings wickets left with only 25 minutes of the day remaining, there was still much tribulation to come.

No over during this amazing day was more harrowing to England's supporters than the last, begun only after the umpires had thought long and hard about an appeal against the light. In the course of it, England lost three wickets, the last of them when, folly of all follies, Arthur McInnes was run out going for a fourth run.

A year or two later, with the introduction of full and mandatory covering of all Test pitches, such days as this went out if that deprives us of some unforgettable, unimaginable cricket, it has to be said that it makes for a fairer game.

When, on the Tuesday morning, England duly lost that match at Brisbane, despite a brilliant innings by Hutton, they had batted, bowled and fielded the better of the two sides and yet been beaten by 70 runs. In the bar of the Lemnos Hotel that evening, Keith Miller, ever the sportsman, said: "I'd rather we'd lost than won like that."

It was hard to bear, but I would not have missed it for anything.

English cricket's forgotten man still standing by for fair deal

Michael Henderson on the disappointment that drives Angus Fraser on in Australia

IT WOULD be wrong to call Angus Fraser an angry man; not now. Puzzled is more like it and that puzzlement does not make him the member of an exclusive club. Across England, and beyond, people were wondering, when the first Test began in Brisbane early today, why on earth he was not taking part.

He was called in as temporary cover earlier in the week when Devon Malcolm went down with chicken-pox, but is now turning out instead for Western Suburbs, the Sydney club he is attached to this winter. The involvement has helped him cope with the disappointment of his deselection and he is not walking around with a long face. That is not to say he has forgotten the vote taken on September 1, which closed an official door full in that face. He has not, and he will not be content until he has replied fully, in his own way.

He will not allow bitterness to corrode his personality, although, for a few days after the selection meeting, it kept cropping up. To say he is transparently honest is to state the obvious and is one reason why cricketers value him so highly. He does not want to cut corners, just a fair deal from others, and he does not think he got one.

"I might be kidding myself and there were times in the two years I was out of the team with my hip injury that I did, but I thought I bowled well last summer," he said. "I am prepared to say I have bowled badly if I have and there were times when I was tired, but I do not think it is fair to say that I lost my nip. In fact, I was very pleased with my form for Middlesex. My immediate response is, 'I will prove you wrong as soon as I can'."

There were Chinese whis-

pers before the touring party was announced that Fraser's name would not be in it. Subsequently, there have been suggestions that Raymond Illingworth, the chairman of selectors, displeased by Fraser's displeasure, wanted him scrubbed from the standby list. Yet he is standing by, in the best possible location to benefit if one of England's quick bowlers breaks down, which recent history suggests is not impossible.

When he is not taking wickets, Fraser can always be relied upon to bowl up one end. With attacking bowlers like Malcolm, DeFreitas and Gough in the team, a bowler of complementary skills might be thought useful. It is only a year since Fraser took eight wickets on his Test comeback to help beat Australia at the Oval. More pertinently, it is seven months since his eight for 75 enabled England to claim the most remarkable victory for many a year, in Barbados.

It is in the nature of things that bowlers are judged less mercifully than batsmen. Graeme Hick goes on, without end, amen: good luck to him. Fraser, whose Test credentials are more impressive, is turned out into the cold. What hurt him more than anything was the breach with Michael Atherton, the captain, who has been more

than a colleague — a good friend, in fact — for some years.

"I could have moaned about the way I was used last season," Fraser said. "I got spells of two or three overs when I needed ones of six or seven. Over the ball-tampering allegations at Lord's, I defended Atherton when I was asked on television for my comments. When I was not picked for the tour, I was disappointed that a phone call did not come my way."

The friendship is healing. When Fraser met Atherton at the end-of-season Cricketers' Association dinner in London, there was a patching-up of sorts — but, after separations like that, a working relationship is never quite the same again.

"Body language," a term that is not always easy to define, counted against Fraser, which perhaps does not say much for the "thinking language" of three selectors. Fraser is happy to defend the charge.

"My body language was of a frustrated bowler who had got no better than a three-wicket haul all summer and who was trying desperately to leave the field with a seven-for," he said. "There are days when you will never take more than three no matter how well you bowl."

"As a batsman, you can get a good ball or a bad decision. For a bowler, a bad day is just

that, not five dodgy minutes. Then there are other days, like Barbados, which are yours even when you are not necessarily bowling better."

Fraser could have played this winter for Tasmania. He preferred instead to abide by the word he gave Western Suburbs, a club he played for six winters ago. He enjoys the cricket, the comradeship and admires Australian enthusiasm for cricket, and sport in general.

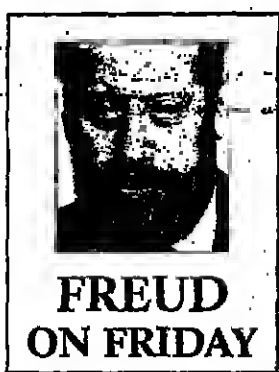
"At our club, the practice sessions are taken seriously," he said. "Players line up in the nets to bat and bowl in a proper way and, when they are not doing that, they're having serious fielding practice. The standard of the grade cricket here is the level of county second XI back home."

"The good thing is, the pitches are true. In England, club pitches can be damp and uneven. Here, you have to bowl properly to get something out of them and that creates a better standard of cricket. It is not easy work. In Australia, they think you can play only when you have done it against them. Reputations mean little."

Sydney holds other memories for Fraser. His chronic hip complaint can be traced back to New Year's Day 1991, when he played a one-day international at the SCG and withdrew from the next Test. "It took two years to get back into the team and it was only when I realised how far short of my true game I had fallen," he said.

There is an optimistic postscript that Michael Illingworth, Titmus and Bolas might note. "I feel I have a lot of international cricket left in me and intend to force my way back in next summer," Fraser said. If not before.

Home-cooked Illingworth is left behind fielding the flak



FREUD ON FRIDAY

A glossy magazine that I perused in my dentist's waiting-room contained an article about Nineties parties: apparently, cocktails are now mean, lean and lethal; dry-as-a-bone Martinis are again adding to the feeling of fun and frolic entertaining at home is more popular than doing so in other folk's ballrooms; and the very best parties entail home cooking, not catering. Also, home-grown flowers are in, uplight topiary out. The criterion, wrote the author, is for guests to leave at dawn having drunk divinely, danced all night and met a handsome stranger.

Earlier this week, I went to a Sports Writers' Association luncheon and found it quite different. We gathered in an upstairs room of a public house on Blackfriars Bridge and after a few jars of Carling beer we sat down to soup — caressing soup. Although there was no menu, the presence on each table of two sauce boats — one filled with English mustard, the other containing a sort of horseradish-flavoured wash, persuaded us to expect roast beef.

We were right, which was more than could be said of the

roast beef. Then, some five minutes after it had been served, a waitress bearing a dish of mashed swedes raced into the room to dispense this delicacy as if absence of swedes might prevent the meal from gaining an award. Cheese followed and less than an hour after we had taken our seats the chairman rose to his feet to announce that this was the best attended Sports Writers' Association luncheon this year, better attended even than when Alan Sugar came. He urged us, when writing about the event, to mention the Sports Writers' Association, then introduced Ray Illingworth.

Let me remind you about

Illingworth. Born in Pudsey in 1932, he followed in the footsteps of co-Pudseyites Hutton and Sutcliffe to excel on the field of cricket. A regular Yorkshire county player from the age of 20, he blossomed in the wonderful summer of 1959. Firm, true pitches gave him the opportunity to excel with bat and ball, scoring 1,726 runs, taking 120 wickets, playing twice for England against India and making the Wisden 1960 annual as one of its five cricketers of the year.

By 1970, he was the England captain. Played 31, won 12, lost five, drew 14 was his record: the last England captain to regain the Ashes in Australia... and, 20 years later, after a series of interviews during which Doug Insole, a senior executive of the Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB), asked him whether, if appointed, he would mind being in charge of the baggage ("I told him I'd let him have an answer later in today"), they offered him the job of chairman of the selectors.

Supreme is the word they used; overlord also. He would be, it was announced, a "hands-on" commander of our cricketing troops and, if the

TCCB did not actually say that Ted Dexter's appointment had been a mistake, it is noticeable that they neither built him a statue nor erected a stand bearing his name. With ill in charge, it was all going to be different.

Why, then, when our men are on the far side of the world, facing Australia in the first Test match in Brisbane, is he in London? ... is the sort of question we had in mind when the time came for us to quiz the guest of honour (whom I write "we", I mean the Sports Writers' Association).

In nominating him in the 1960 almanack, Wisden had written "reliable in the field, a safe catcher... pleasant in looks, manner and dress". Nothing has changed.

"OK lads, first question," the chairman of the selectors said, and we came at him from all around the room. He fielded with aplomb. "It is not my job to be out there, my job is to select the sides."

"Atherton has my phone number, both here and in Spain; no, he hasn't rung yet. Yes, I did think he'd give me a tinkle."

He thought he and the England captain were on good terms, finding him £2,000 for tampering with a ball is probably what saved Atherton's job. Is that not just one other reason why you should be out there? we asked.

"Michael is very good with the press unless he is upset." Were you consulted about Fraser? Fraser was the stand-by bowler; to me, he looked washed-up, but Atherton said he wanted him. I did not think that was a wise statement for the England captain to make. He should have built up the confidence of the bowlers he has.

"Gough always has a problem with fast-medium balls that swing away from the bat." "Robin Smith is scared stiff of spinners; he has not got the technique."

We asked why it was that we had heard nothing from M. J. K. Smith, the tour manager in Australia. He said: "Well, the baggage has arrived."

But the theme to which we returned was constant: are you here and not there? His first response was: "Any age, you don't want to be away from your wife and family."

Then: "Lord's instructions when I was appointed was to do 110 days a year... but this is sending me out for the second and third Tests."

Does it amuse you that Lord's treats people like this? It has amused me for years.

Richardson fit to maintain record

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

DAVID Richardson, the South Africa wicketkeeper, will today become the only man to have played in all 18 Tests since the republic returned to international cricket. South Africa meet New Zealand in the first of a three-match series in Johannesburg.

Richardson, who broke his right thumb in a domestic match last week, was passed fit after a lengthy net session yesterday. The news is a bonus for the South Africans, who have lost Kieper Wessels, their former captain, and Allan Donald, the opening bowler, through injury.

"It's something we have just got to live with," Bob Woolmer, the South Africa coach, said of Wessels's absence. "It means that we haven't got his runs, but that just means someone else has got to score them." Donald's absence reduces the South African firepower considerably, although Richardson Snell has taken wickets consistently this season.

Despite losing all six games in a recent one-day triangular series in Pakistan, South Africa will start as favourites, although the young New Zealanders have enjoyed a fine start to their tour. Their top seven batsmen have all made runs and Dion Nash, who

performed so well against England at Lord's earlier this year, has been taking wickets.

"The preparation has been excellent," Geoff Howarth, the New Zealand coach, said yesterday. "Confidence is high, the form is good and there's a great feeling among the side. We have a young side that is inexperienced and we are in the course of the rebuilding process, but there comes a time when you have to leave behind those excuses, or reasons, for not doing well and start producing consistent results at Test match level. I think this side is nearly at the stage."

The sides have not met since New Zealand hosted a

series in 1964, when all three Tests ended in a draw. New Zealand last visited South Africa in 1961-62, when a side led by John Reid drew an exciting series 2-2.

SOUTH AFRICA (from): W J Coetzee (captain), A C Hudson, G Pienaar, D J Cullison, J N Rhodes, J Corns, B M Morkel, D J Richardson or S J Potgieter, R P Sew, C E Elwens, C R Matthews, P S de Villiers.

NEW ZEALAND (probably): I R Rutherford (captain), B A Young, D J Murray, S P Fleming, M D Crowe, C Z Hume or S A Thomson, A C Parore, M H Hart, D J Nash, S B Doult, R P de Groot.

Dean Jones has changed his mind and declared himself available to play international cricket again for Australia. Jones, 33, declared himself unavailable for his national side after an unhappy tour of South Africa earlier this year.



Illingworth was all smiles in London at the Sports Writers' Association luncheon as England prepared for the first Test in Brisbane. Photograph: Martin Beddall

Dubacilla ready to reward the Coles

Richard Evans meets a couple who have made sacrifices so their mare has the chance to fulfil her potential

The choice facing Veronica and Henry Cole during the summer was one that would be familiar to millions of parents throughout Britain. The precocious youngster had bred and nurtured her formative years had blossomed into a star with the potential to go to the very top — but only if they made personal sacrifices in order to pay for the finest education in the land.

For the Coles there was never a moment's doubt and tomorrow afternoon at Newbury they will look on nervously to see if their faith has been justified when Dubacilla takes on some of the best of her generation — in the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup.

At first glance, it may appear a shade far-fetched to compare the treatment of a

when the problems began for the Coles.

"Everyone was talking about her being a Gold Cup horse but we honestly don't have the facilities here for a Gold Cup horse. We knew if we didn't do her justice we would have to live with that for ever," Veronica Cole recalled. "We felt this was a horse who came across once in a lifetime and we had to invest in her. We had to give her the best."

The turning point followed a telephone call from Timeform, the respected Halifax-based racing analysts, during which it was suggested the Hennessy could be an early target for Dubacilla. The Coles knew that was close to impossible if they continued training her. The road work needed to build up fitness would be increasingly hazardous due to extra traffic roaring round the local roads and lanes; and the land on their farm would still be too firm for proper exercise.

By chance, Henry Cole had previously been on an open day at Jackdaws Castle, the state-of-the-art base of the champion trainer, David Nicholson. He left enormously impressed — by its gallops, facilities and peaceful atmosphere — and depressed by the relative inadequacy of his own training set-up. After mulling over the options, a decision was quickly reached. A day after phoning Nicholson about the possibility of him training Dubacilla, the horse box made the journey from Somerset to Gloucestershire.

There was a risk involved. How would she settle in at her new surroundings? A couple of years earlier she had been sent to another trainer but



Dubacilla, contented in her new surroundings at Nicholson's Jackdaws Castle, is primed for her greatest test

She is like a member of the family. When I took her to David Nicholson's wife, Dinah, said I had a lump in my throat. It was like taking a child to school. She is such a treasured possession.

Dinah Nicholson remembers the day well. "It was just like a parent taking and leaving a child at school. A sit down and a cup of tea was needed," she said. But what of her chances on

Saturday? Dubacilla beat Docklands Express on her seasonal debut at Sandown despite "blowing up" two fences from home. While she has never been an extravagant worker at home, she has pleased Nicholson and his wife. "Early on she was pushed to get to the top of our gallops but two or three days before Sandown she clicked into gear and has not looked back since," Dinah said.

"At Sandown, I thought she was going to win a minute jumping the third last, but all of a sudden after touching down over the second last it looked as though she was going to get beat. Her courage saw her through," the trainer added. "She had a good blow. There was nowhere else I could have run her. If I had gone to Haydock [for the Edward Hamner Memorial

Chase] she would have got a 4lb penalty for the Hennessy." Dubacilla will carry 11st 9lb tomorrow, the same weight she would be set to carry in the Cheltenham Gold Cup, given her mare's allowance. "I would fancy Barton Bank off 12 stone in the Hennessy, so if she is a Gold Cup mare she has to finish thereabouts. We are more than hopeful she will run a big race," Nicholson added.

Nap: FAIR BROTHER (3.00 Newbury)
Next best: FEEL THE POWER (3.30 Newbury)

Thunderer was in good form at Taunton yesterday, selecting five of the six winners, including L'Uomo Più (6-7), Too Sharp (11-2) and Play Games (5-1).

child prodigy with that of a horse. But then, Dubacilla is no ordinary horse, and the Coles are special owners.

Dubacilla, bred by them and until the summer trained under permit by Henry Cole on their 150-acre farm at Beer Crocombe, in Somerset, always had enormous potential. When Philip Schofield, a leading point-to-point rider, sat on her as a four-year-old he said she was the best horse he had ever seen. His analysis has been justified by events.

Her victories last season, including the Timeform Hall of Fame Chase at Cheltenham and the Comet Chase at Ascot, meant at the age of eight she was not far below Cheltenham Gold Cup class — and that is

Monsieur Le Cure to make reappearance in Ireland

MONSIEUR Le Cure will belatedly make his seasonal reappearance in Ireland tomorrow when he contests the two mile, five furlong, Durkan Punchestown Chase. Paul Carberry takes the ride.

Last season's Sun Alliance Chase winner had been entered for three races this week. He missed last Wednesday's Edward Hamner Chase at Haydock after a slight setback when he spread a plate on the gallops.

One of the factors that helped the trainer John Edwards to decide on the Irish race in preference to the Peterborough Chase, at Huntingdon and Newbury's Jacky Upton Chase, was the prize-money of £35,000. That, however, was not the only reason. "It was not the track would suit," Edwards said.

The Punchestown race will provide a stiff test for Monsieur Le Cure, with both Mervyn Galt and Second Schedule in opposition, but the Ross-on-Wye trainer was optimistic, saying: "I'll tell you better on Saturday night — but my horse is well and in good form and I'm hopeful of a good showing."

As long as Monsieur Le Cure runs well tomorrow, his next outing will be on Boxing day, when he enters the King George VI Tripleprint Chase at Kempton or Wetherby's Rowland Meyrick Chase. "But the main thing is to get Saturday's race into him and take it from there," Edwards added.

Jim Dreaper confirmed yesterday that Merry Gale would be one of Monsieur Le Cure's rivals in tomorrow's race, but he was far from confident, saying: "I'm not sure about any of our horses at the moment. While

"I am looking forward to riding him," Guest said. "I have not ridden him before but I have seen a lot of him. He's a really nice horse, a strong galloper. He reminds me a lot of Beech Road." Guest, who won the 1989 Champion Hurdle on Beech Road, was successful on board Houghton for Johnson at Hexham on Wednesday. "I was very grateful to Sue and Harvey Smith, who let me off Shul Soar so I could ride Houghton. I owe everything to Sue and Harvey — they are the best bosses in the world. Without their support I wouldn't be in the position I am now."

they are not running badly enough to suggest anything is desperately wrong, they are not running well."

Other jockey bookings yesterday concerned Richard Guest, who has come in for the plum ride on Morelli in the Fighting Fifth Hurdle at Newcastle tomorrow. Norman Williamson, who rode Howard Johnson's hurdler to win the Ekbalco Handicap Hurdle at the course earlier this month, and Charlie Swan, had both been linked with the six-year-old but are unavailable.

"I am looking forward to riding him," Guest said. "I have not ridden him before but I have seen a lot of him. He's a really nice horse, a strong galloper. He reminds me a lot of Beech Road." Guest, who won the 1989 Champion Hurdle on Beech Road, was successful on board Houghton for Johnson at Hexham on Wednesday. "I was very grateful to Sue and Harvey Smith, who let me off Shul Soar so I could ride Houghton. I owe everything to Sue and Harvey — they are the best bosses in the world. Without their support I wouldn't be in the position I am now."

BANGOR

THUNDERER
12.50 On Golden Pond, 1.20 Counterbalance, 1.50 Miss Noreen Oats, 2.20 Greenhill Raffles, 2.50 Martell Boy, 3.20 MINTY'S FOLLY.

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 3.20 MINTY'S FOLLY.

GOING: SOFT (HEAVY IN PLACES) SIS

12.50 CROSMERE HURDLE (2,100m) (7 runners)

1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100-101-102-103-104-105-106-107-108-109-110-111-112-113-114-115-116-117-118-119-120-121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128-129-130-131-132-133-134-135-136-137-138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145-146-147-148-149-150-151-152-153-154-155-156-157-158-159-160-161-162-163-164-165-166-167-168-169-170-171-172-173-174-175-176-177-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218-219-220-221-222-223-224-225-226-227-228-229-230-231-232-233-234-235-236-237-238-239-240-241-242-243-244-245-246-247-248-249-250-251-252-253-254-255-256-257-258-259-260-261-262-263-264-265-266-267-268-269-270-271-272-273-274-275-276-277-278-279-280-281-282-283-284-285-286-287-288-289-290-291-292-293-294-295-296-297-298-299-300-301-302-303-304-305-306-307-308-309-310-311-312-313-314-315-316-317-318-319-320-321-322-323-324-325-326-327-328-329-330-331-332-333-334-335-336-337-338-339-340-341-342-343-344-345-346-347-348-349-350-351-352-353-354-355-356-357-358-359-360-361-362-363-364-365-366-367-368-369-370-371-372-373-374-375-376-377-378-379-380-381-382-383-384-385-386-387-388-389-390-391-392-393-394-395-396-397-398-399-400-401-402-403-404-405-406-407-408-409-410-411-412-413-414-415-416-417-418-419-420-421-422-423-424-425-426-427-428-429-430-431-432-433-434-435-436-437-438-439-440-441-442-443-444-445-446-447-448-449-450-451-452-453-454-455-456-457-458-459-460-461-462-463-464-465-466-467-468-469-470-471-472-473-474-475-476-477-478-479-480-481-482-483-484-485-486-487-488-489-490-491-492-493-494-495-496-497-498-499-500-501-502-503-504-505-506-507-508-509-510-511-512-513-514-515-516-517-518-519-520-521-522-523-524-525-526-527-528-529-530-531-532-533-534-535-536-537-538-539-540-541-542-543-544-545-546-547-548-549-550-551-552-553-554-555-556-557-558-559-560-561-562-563-564-565-566-567-568-569-570-571-572-573-574-575-576-577-578-579-580-581-582-583-584-585-586-587-588-589-590-591-592-593-594-595-596-597-598-599-600-601-602-603-604-605-606-607-608-609-610-611-612-613-614-615-616-617-618-619-620-621-622-623-624-625-626-627-628-629-630-631-632-633-634-635-636-637-638-639-640-641-642-643-644-645-646-647-648-649-650-651-652-653-654-655-656-657-658-659-660-661-662-663-664-665-666-667-668-669-670-671-672-673-674-675-676-677-678-679-680-681-682-683-684-685-686-687-688-689-690-691-692-693-694-695-696-697-698-699-700-701-702-703-704-705-706-707-708-709-710-711-712-713-714-715-716-717-718-719-720-721-722-723-724-725-726-727-728-729-730-731-732-733-734-735-736-737-738-739-740-741-742-743-744-745-746-747-748-749-750-751-752-753-754-755-756-757-758-759-760-761-762-763-764-765-766-767-768-769-770-771-772-773-774-775-776-777-778-779-780-781-782-783-784-785-786-787-788-789-790-791-792-793-794-795-796-797-798-799-800-801-802-803-804-805-806-807-808-809-810-811-812-813-814-815-816-817-818-819-820-821-822-823-824-825-826-827-828-829-830-831-832-833-834-835-836-837-838-839-840-841-842-843-844-845-846-847-848-849-850-851-852-853-854-855-856-857-858-859-860-861-862-863-864-865-866-867-868-869-870-871-872-873-874-875-876-877-878-879-880-881-882-883-884-885-886-887-888-889-890-891-892-893-894-895-896-897-898-899-900-901-902-903-904-905-906-907-908-909-910-911-912-913-914-915-916-917-918-919-920-921-922-923-924-925-926-927-928-929-930-931-932-933-934-935-936-937-938-939-940-941-942-943-944-945-946-947-948-949-950-951-952-953-954-955-956-957-958-959-960-961-962-963-964-965-966-967-968-969-970-971-972-973-974-975-976-977-978-979-980-981-982-983-984-985-986-987-988-989-990-991-992-993-994-995-996-997-998-999-1000-1001-1002-1003-1004-1005-1006-1007-1008-1009-1010-1011-1012-1013-1014-1015-1016-1017-1018-1019-1020-1021-1022-1023-1024-1025-1026-1027-1028-1029-1030-1031-1032-1033-1034-1035-1036-1037-1038-1039-1040-1041-1042-1043-1044-1045-1046-1047-1048-1049-1050-1051-1052-1053-1054-1055-1056-1057-1058-1059-1060-1061-1062-1063-1064-1065-1066-1067-1068-1069-1070-1071-1072-1073-1074-1075-1076-1077-1078-1079-1080-1081-1082-1083-1084-1085-1086-1087-1088-1089-1090-1091-1092-1093-1094-1095-1096-1097-1098-1099-1100-1101-1102-1103-1104-1105-1106-1107-1108-1109-1110-1111-1112-1113-1114-1115-1116-1117-1118-1119-1120-1121-1122-1123-1124-1125-1126-1127-1128-1129-1130-1131-1132-1133-1134-1135-1136-1137-1138-1139-1140-1141-1142-1143-1144-1145-1146-1147-1148-1149-1150-1151-1152-1153-1154-1155-1156-1157-1158-1159-1160-1161-1162-1163-1164-1165-1166-1167-1168-1169-1170-1171-1172-1173-1174-1175-1176-1177-1178-1179-1180-1181-1182-1183-1184-1185-1186-1187-1188-1189-1190-1191-1192-1193-1194-1195-1196-1197-1198-1199-1200-1201-1202-1203-1204-1205-1206-1207-1208-1209-1210-1211-1212-1213-1214-1215-1216-1217-1218-1219-1220-1221-1222-1223-1224-1225-1226-1227-1228-1229-1230-1231-1232-1233-1234-1235-1236-1237-1238-1239-1240-1241-1242-1243-1244-1245-1246-1247-1248-1249-1250-1251-1252-1253-1254-1255-1256-1257-1258-1259-1260-1261-1262-1263-1264-1265-1266-1267-1268-1269-1270-1271-1272-1273-1274-1275-1276-1277-1278-1279-1280-1281-1282-1283-1284-1285-1286-1287-1288-1289-1290-1291-1292-1293-1294-1295-1296-1297-1298-1299-1300-1301-1302-1303-1304-1305-1306-1307-1308-1309-1310-1311-1312-1313-1314-1315-1316-1317-1318-1319-1320-1321-1322-1323-1324-1325-1326-1327-1328-1329-1330-1331-1332-1333-1334-1335-1336-1337-1338-1339-1340-1341-1342-1343-1344-1345-1346-1347-1348-1349-1350-1351-1352-1353-1354-1355-1356-1357-1358-1359-1360-1361-1362-1363-1364-1365-1366-1367-1368-1369-1370-1371-1372-1373-1374-1375-1376-1377-1378-1379-1380-1381-1382-1383-1384-1385-1386-1387-1388-1389-1390-1391-1392-1393-1394-1395-1396-1397-1398-1399-1400-1401-1402-1403-1404-1405-1406-1407-1408-1409-1410-1411-1412-1413-1414-1415-1416-1417-1418-1419-1420-1421-1422-1423-1424-1425-1426-1427-1428-1429-1430-1431-1432-1433-1434-1435-1436-1437-1438-1439-1440-1441-1442-1443-1444-1445-1446-1447-1448-1449-1450-1451-1452-1453-1454-1455-1456-1457-1458-1459-1460-1461-1462-1463-1464-1465-1466-1467-1468-1469-1470-1471-1472-1473-1474-1475-1476-1477-1478-1479-1480-1481-1482-1483-1484-1485-1486-1487-1488-1489-1490-1491-1492-1493-1494-1495-1496-1497-1498-1499-1500-1501-1502-1503-1504-1505-1506-1507-1508-1509-1510-1511-1512-1513-1514-1515-1516-1517-1518-1519-1520-1521-1522-1523-1524-1525-1526-1527-1528-1529-1530-1531-1532-1533-1534-1535-1536-1537-1538-1539-1540-1541-1542-1543-1544-1545-1546-1547-1548-1549-1550-1551-1552-1553-1554-1555-1556-1557-1558-1559-1560-1561-1562-1563-1564-1565-1566-1567-1568-1569-1570-1571-1572-1573-1574-1575-1576-1577-1578-1579-1580-1581-1582-1583-1584-1585-1586-1587-1588-1589-1590-1591-1592-1593-1594-1595-1596-1597-1598-1599-1600-1601-1602-1603-1604-1605-1606-1607-1608-1609-1610-1611-1612-1613-1614-1615-1616-1617-1618-1619-1620-1621-1622-1623-1624-1625-1626-1627-1628-1629-1630-1631-1632-1633-1634-1635-1636-1637-1638-1639-1640-1641-1642-1643-1644-1645-1646-1647-1648-1649-1650-1651-1652-1653-1654-1655-1656-1657-1658-1659-1660-1661-1662-1663-1664-1665-1666-1667-1668-1669-1670-1671-1672-1673-1674-1675-1676-1677-1678-1679-1680-1681-1682-1683-1684-1685-1686-1687-1688-1689-1690-1691-1692-1693-1694-1695-1696-1697-1698-1699-1700-1701-1702-1703-1704-1705-1706-1707-1708-1709-1710-1711-1712-1713-1714-1715-1716-1717-1718-1719-1720-1721-1722-1723-1724-1725-1726-1727-1728-1729-1730-1731-1732-1733-1734-1735-1736-1737-1738-1739-1740-1741-1742-1743-1744-1745-1746-1747-1748-1749-1750-1751-1752-1753-1754-1755-1756-1757-1758-1759-1760-1761-1762-1763-1764-1765-1766-1767-1768-1769-1770-1771-1772-1773-1774-1775-1776-1777-1778-1779-1780-1781-1782-1783-1784-1785-1786-1787-1788-1789-1790-1791-1792-1793-1794-1795-1796-1797-1798-1799-1800-1801-1802-1803-1804-1805-1806-1807-1808-1809-1810-1811-1812-1813-1814-1815-1816-1817-1818-1819-1820-1821-1822-1823-1824-1825-1826-1827-1828-1829-1830-1831-1832-1833-1834-1835-1836-1837-1838-1839-1840-1841-1842-1843-1844-1845-1846-1847-1848-1849-1850-1851-1852-1853-1854-1855-1856-1857-1858-1859-1860-1861-1862-1863-1864-1865-1866-1867-1868-1869-1870-1871-1872-1873-1874-1875-1876-1877-1878-1879-1880-1881-1882-1883-1884-1885-1886-1887-1888-1889-1890-1891-1892-1893-1894-1895-1896-1897-1898-1899-1900-1901-1902-1903-1904-1905-1906-1907-1908-1909-1910-1911-1912-1913-1914-1915-1916-1917-1918-1919-1920-1921-1922-1923-1924-1925-1926-1927-1928-1929-1930-1931-1932-1933-1934-1935-1936-1937-1938-1939-1940-1941-1942-1943-1944-1945-1946-1947-1948-1949-1950-1951-1952-1953-1954-1955-1956-1957-1958-1959-1960-1961-1962-1963-1964-1965-1966-1967-1968-1969-1970-1971-1972-1973-1974-1975-1976-1977-1978-1979-1980-1981-1982-1983-1984-1985-1986-1987-1988-1989-1990-1991-1992-1993-1994-1995-1996-1997-1998-1999-2000-2001-200

Brilliant British driver tipped to be next world rallying champion

McRae on course for glittering future

By Oliver Hour

IN THE cavernous media centre at the International Hotel, Chester, Juha Kankkunen, four times the world rallying champion, stood awkwardly on a dais and attempted to put Colin McRae's win in the Network Q RAC Rally into perspective. "It took me 11 years to win my home event," he said. "So Colin has done pretty well."

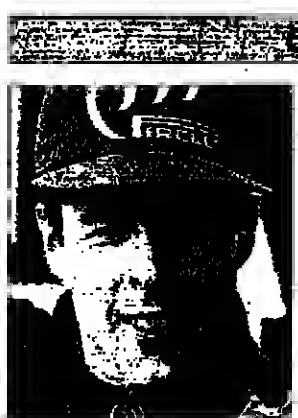
On the other side of the hall, David Richards, the Subaru team principal, still did not know whether to laugh or cry. Carlos Sainz, his leading driver, had already departed for Spain in high dudgeon, having failed at the last to claim his third world championship. The title went to Toyota again — in the form of Didier Auriol this time — and it was a bitter pill to swallow. In the end, though, Richards gave up the struggle and let the smiles take over. In McRae, he said, he had a driver with the potential to be world champion next year.

who could do for rallying in Britain what Nigel Mansell and Damon Hill have done for Formula One.

McRae, a Scot who does not take easily to the limelight, seems to have been around for a long time, making an annual pilgrimage into the public consciousness as the latest unfortunate trying to become the first Briton since Roger Clark, in 1976, to win his home rally. In fact, he is still only 26 and, as Kankkunen pointed out, he has succeeded far faster than most drivers in attaining his initial objective.

He has shown this year that he has the steel to make it right to the top. Earlier in the season, it appeared he was on the point of dismissal from Subaru after a string of poor results culminated in premature elimination from the Argentine Rally.

With the pressure on him, he won the next event, The Rally of New Zealand, and the one after it, in Australia, performed creditably in San Remo and then won in Brit-



Born: August 5, 1968, Lanark, West Lothian, Scotland.
Marital status: Single.
Hobbies: Water skiing, motorcycling, mountain biking.
Rally debut: 1985 (Chrysler Avenger).
World championship rally debut: 1987 (Vauxhall Nova Sport).
World championship rally wins: 3 (New Zealand 1993, 1994; RAC 1994).

Honours
1987: 1st in class, British Open championship.
1988: 1st in class, British Open championship; 1st in class, British national championship.
1989: Runner-up, British Open championship.

1991: British champion, 1st, Telford; 1st, Circuit of Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
1992: British champion, 1st, Vauxhall Nova Sport; 1st, Peugeot 205 GTI; 1st, Peugeot 205 GTI; 1st, Peugeot 205 GTI.
1993: 1st, New Zealand; 1st, Malaysia; 1994: 1st, New Zealand; 1st, Australia; 1st, New Zealand GAC.

RAC Rally record
1987: Vauxhall Nova Sport — retired.
1988: Peugeot 205 GTI — retired.
1989: Ford Sierra RS Cosworth — retired.
1990: Ford Sierra RS Cosworth 4x4 — 6th.
1991: Subaru Legacy — retired.
1992: Subaru Legacy — 6th.
1993: Subaru Impreza — retired.
1994: Subaru Impreza — 1st.

ain, finishing more than three minutes ahead of his nearest challenger and dominating the event from start to finish.

Such is the extent of the turnaround that he is now being widely tipped as a front runner for the world championship next year and to become the next British motor sport superstar.

"It has been a long uphill battle with Colin at times," Richards said, "but, in the last

six months, we seem to have turned the corner. His last four rallies have been impeccable.

"You have only got to see what has happened to the level of interest in Formula One in Britain, with Mansell and Hill contesting the championship, to see the effect Colin is already having on rallying. All nations are patriotic and it will help enormously to have a British driver at the front.

"Everyone has been a bit loath to catch on to Colin because he has had so many false dawns, but, if you ask the majority of people in the sport who is currently the fastest driver in the world, they will tell you Colin McRae. He has won three of the eight rallies we will contest next year, we have a very strong package here and he is going to be right up there."

Subaru's annual rally bud-

Single goal saves face as England disappoint

England 1
Belarusia 0

FROM SYDNEY FRISKIN
IN SYDNEY

A GOAL by Nick Thompson from a short corner, with only six minutes left, spared England's blushes in the World Cup hockey match against Belarusia here yesterday.

Belarusia, a new hockey nation with only 250 registered players, five affiliated clubs and no synthetic surface of its own, defended stubbornly and launched only sporadic raids, forcing three short corners to England's five.

"These tactics usually serve to disrupt rhythm, but, on this occasion, there was no rhythm

by McGuire, Thompson scored on the rebound for England's first win in the competition, which gave David Whitaker, the coach, more grounds for optimism.

A more serious test awaits the team against Argentina tomorrow. It was a special day, however, for Jon Potter, the England captain, who achieved the total of 229 appearances for England and Great Britain, surpassing the figure of 228 set by Richard Leman.

ENGLAND: S. Mason (Frederick), J. Hall (Old Loughtonians), P. McGuire (Teddington), J. Potter (Hounslow, captain), S. Singh (Croydon), S. Hinch (Hounslow), C. Mayer (Canvey), R. Garcia (Polo Club, Barcelona), N. Thompson (Old Loughtonians), J. Laidler (Teddington), R. Cuthbert (Hounslow), Substitutes used: J. Shaw (Croydon), K. Taylor (Teddington), O. Williams (Hounslow), S. McKee (Teddington).

Belarusia: A. Barmenkov, V. Kichinskiy, D. Zharovskiy, S. Brodskiy, O. Gribitskiy, V. Koshchik (captain), I. Barinov, A. Budnikov, V. Khokhlov, I. Savitskiy, A. Zhukovskiy. Substitutes used: S. Melnikov, A. Vinnitskiy, Y. Kucherenko.

Referee: S. Morgan (United States) and S. Kuyukov (Japan).

□ Taco van der Horst, the Holland forward, plundered a record haul of five goals as the defending champions opened their account with a crushing 8-1 defeat of Belgium.

Holland have maintained their fine form throughout 1994 to justify their position as tournament favourites and posted a warning to their rivals in group B. In the other match in the group, India gained some consolation for their defeat in the Asian Games final by defeating South Korea 2-0.

Van der Horst's total, with all the goals scored with flicks from penalty corners, was the highest individual tally in World Cup matches. "The Belgian goalkeeper [Michel van Cost] kept coming out," Van der Horst, 28, said. "I kept playing the same corner. It was hard for him to reach the high ball."

Van der Horst's haul might have been even higher since Holland did not use him for their first three corners of the match. It was the second time in his career that Van der Horst has scored five times in an international; he did so against Pakistan in the 1993 Champions Trophy. He now has 81 goals to his name in international matches.

Holland, who led 2-1 at half-time, had eight corners in the



Halls, of England, falls to his knees in a tussle for the ball with Budnikov

match to Belgium's five. The Dutch took an early lead through Stephan Veen, but the teams were level at 1-1 until the last second of the first half, when Van der Horst converted the first of his corner goals. Belgium's equaliser was scored by Alexandre de Chaffoy from a penalty corner.

Marc Delissen, the Holland captain, was the dominant player on the field. He set his side on the way to their second-half goal spree with a penalty conversion after only 20 seconds of the second half. Van der Horst's four goals after the interval were interrupted by a second goal by Veen.

India scored their goals within a minute late in the second half through the attacking players, Gavin Ferreira and the newcomer, Edward Aranha. Earlier in the half, Shakeel Ahmad had put a penalty stroke wide of the target for India, while Korea missed several good scoring opportunities.

Thompson keen to call shots against old friends

By ALIX RAMSAY

YOU do not have to be mad to be a goalkeeper, but it helps — especially in hockey. Anybody who volunteers to be the last line of defence in a game where everyone is armed with sticks and a determination to drill the ball straight through you and into the net must have at least one screw loose.

Jo Thompson, however, is saner than most. Tomorrow, she will try to keep a clean sheet for Ipswich against her old club, Slough, as they compete for the leading position in the women's national league.

After ten years at Slough, and with so many friends and colleagues at the club, Thompson used to dread going back to play against them, but now, in her third season at Ipswich, she feels a part of the Suffolk side. Come tomorrow, she knows her main role will be to keep the rest of the squad positive as they try to record their first league victory over Slough.

"It's the most challenging position on the pitch because you're at the mercy of what others do," she said, "but some of my best games are the ones where I don't touch the ball, but help to control the defence and call the shots from the back."

Certainly vocal on the pitch, encouraging and chastising her defenders, be it at league or international level, Thompson is part of the team, yet knows she is separate from it. "You have to be an individual," she said. "I do like to do things my own way, but I probably need to be liked more off the pitch than on it. On the pitch, I don't care what they think, I just play to win."

However, on the pitch, some take her barrage of instructions better than others. The Ipswich back line is, in her opinion, more disciplined than Slough's, which used to get jittery when she shouted at them too much.

"Ipswich are prepared to take more risks and go forward more," she said, "and if the risks do not pay off, Thompson is ready to clean up. 'It's all about heart and feet,' she said. "If your heart is in it and you want it, you can do anything and, if your feet are moving in the right direction, you can always keep the ball out."

Rich appeal drives on golf Challenge

FROM MEL WEBB
IN LA MANGA, SPAIN

ON THE eve of the national final of The Times/MeesPierson Corporate Golf Challenge here, the event received a huge vote of confidence when a seven-figure agreement was completed to lead what is already one of the United Kingdom's biggest amateur golf competitions almost to the end of the century.

MeesPierson, one of Europe's biggest merchant banks, which joined the challenge as title sponsors this year, is to extend its support until 1999 in a deal that is worth £1.1 million over five years. Almost simultaneously, it was announced that Citroen, the giant French car manufacturer, has joined the Challenge as an official sponsor. It will be providing a

fleet of its award-winning cars to the event's support and organisational team.

Darryl Keys, the head of United Kingdom corporate banking at MeesPierson and the man who has led his company's involvement with the Challenge, was in buoyant mood yesterday as he prepared to meet the eight teams who will be contesting the final over 36 holes on Saturday and Sunday.

"Of any sponsorship that we could ever become involved in, this is absolutely perfect for us," he said. "It gets right through to our main market, which is corporate, and it does so in the right way. People don't want a hard sell nowadays and, if you are looking for a subtle approach, sport is the ideal vehicle to achieve that."

"When we went into this,

we said we were looking for 50,000 players this year, but it was a pretty tongue-in-cheek expectation. It turns out that we've had about 40,000 players involved in 700 golf days and we're absolutely thrilled with that figure."

"Everywhere we've been this year, we've been over-whelmed by the reaction of people to MeesPierson and the Challenge. The event has really got through to the business community, who very obviously think that the formula is just right, as we do."

"We can see nothing to stop the Challenge from achieving even greater success in the years to come and that is why we have committed ourselves so early to five extra years' sponsorship."

Keys's views were echoed by Kenneth Forbes, Citroen's national fleet sales manager. "We are delighted to be associated with such a prestigious event," he said. "Corporate golf is growing rapidly and this programme gives us the opportunity to put our products in front of over 50,000 corporate car buyers."

"Companies already involved with the Challenge are those dedicated to the very highest levels of professionalism and customer care. These qualities match our corporate culture and the event fits naturally with us. We are looking forward to an exciting year ahead."

Tchaikovsky in snippets

Seeoff Radio 2, 7.00pm.

Tonight, the music-lover in Derek Jameson triumphs over the newspaperman in him. You should not take the title of the series too seriously, Jameson himself doesn't. He should know, anybody does, that a song is a story no-one else has got. Every known fact about Tchaikovsky and every bit of guesswork he works into tonight's programme has got whiskers on it. He is not fooling us for a moment when he dons his old reporter's hat and says things such as "I've been checking out reports that..." or "Informed sources say..." or "Let's close this dossier..." The snippets of music he uses are the "gems of Tchaikovsky" variety. They are ideal if you want to hum along with Jameson.

Friday Feature: Orpheus Ascending, Radio 3, 10.45pm.

A delightful feature by Piers Fawcett and Giuseppe Rocca tells how a 19th-century Italian shepherd boy with nothing in his pockets and a lamp on his back walked to the French coast, was smuggled across the Channel, became a poet, a playwright and helped to lay the mosaics in St Paul's Cathedral. He was Costantino Meo. The burden of the storytelling is cheerfully carried by his grandson, Edward Anthony Craig. Had it been somebody else, I would have been disinclined to believe that, from such humble beginnings, a man could have gone on to achieve such a generous measure of success in a foreign land.

Peter Daville

RADIO 1	WORLD SERVICE
<p>FM Stereo, 4.00pm Bruno Brookes 6.30pm Steve Wright 8.00pm Simon Mayo 8.30pm Ernie Ford, and at 12.30pm-12.45pm Newcastle 2.00pm Mark Goodier, including Office of the Day and the Get-Around News. Campbell with Orpheus, including at 8.30pm Newcastle 7.00pm Pete Tong's Essential Selection 18.00pm John Peel's Festive 2000 Cable and Satellite 1.00pm: Mark Tondal</p>	<p>All times in GMT. 4.30pm BBC English 4.45pm Fringe 5.00pm Newcastle 6.00pm Morgenmagazin 6.30pm Europe Today 7.00pm News 7.15pm News 7.30pm News 7.45pm News 8.00pm News 8.15pm News 8.30pm News 8.45pm News 9.00pm News 9.15pm News 9.30pm News 9.45pm News 10.00pm News 10.15pm News 10.30pm News 10.45pm News 11.00pm News 11.15pm News 11.30pm News 11.45pm News 12.00pm News 12.15pm News 12.30pm News 12.45pm News 1.00pm News 1.15pm News 1.30pm News 1.45pm News 1.60pm News 1.75pm News 1.90pm News 2.05pm News 2.20pm News 2.35pm News 2.50pm News 3.05pm News 3.20pm News 3.35pm News 3.50pm News 4.05pm News 4.20pm News 4.35pm News 4.50pm News 5.05pm News 5.20pm News 5.35pm News 5.50pm News 6.05pm News 6.20pm News 6.35pm News 6.50pm News 7.05pm News 7.20pm News 7.35pm News 7.50pm News 8.05pm News 8.20pm News 8.35pm News 8.50pm News 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Back to the bad old good old days

A lined Irish peasant woman, chewing on a small clay pipe, blinks and grins into a newsreel camera, while a voice-over, in accents of the 1930s, tells us what to make of her. "Apparently these people do not wish to be modernised and brought up to date," it declares. "So we leave them to themselves! They probably feel their own joys and sorrows in their own way." The picture changes to a close-up of a demure-looking Irishman with big ears (who allegedly labours all day on a diet of potatoes and porridge) and then to a small group of ragged women, dandling their babies. "These Irish types testify to their cheery disposition!"

Week after week, BBC2's compelling social history series *Forbidden Britain* provides a useful corrective to anyone who thinks PC is a curse of modern times; it also beats our heads remorselessly with a film can, yelling a word for

each blow — "There Was, No Golden Age. Say it There Was, No Golden Age." Such myth-breaking is tremendously worthwhile, of course, yet as Britain approaches the year 2000 with its self-esteem at a pretty low ebb, it must be admitted that this message brings despair as well as courage. To be told so vividly that British society has throughout the century encompassed (but suppressed) awareness of such "modern" evils as juvenile crime, paradoxically weakens the impulse to reform. It was ever thus, then? How do you restore a status quo that existed only in a collective false memory syndrome?

Last night the subject was homelessness, from the days when it was called vagrancy. In the 1930s and 1940s, runaway children lived rough in the countryside; Irish labourers walked the roads in search of work; tramps queued up for fumigation in Salvation Army

hostels (and kept a weather eye open for George Orwell). In wartime, a bombed-out Plymouth family lived in a coal ration, and after the war, squatter families commandeered 1,000 disused army camps ("The Southgate Squatters"), decorating the cheerless interiors of unheated Nissen huts with splashes of colour, and flowers in milk bottles. As usual, most of the interviewees were confusingly phlegmatic about their experiences, more proud than bitter, one chap from Newcastle remembered with positive delight the childhood practice of stowing away on foreign ships. "One kid got as far as Oslo! He was a legend, and he was only 11!"

In the second episode of *Finney* (ITV), events took a rather dangerous turn. Oslo beckons across the sea, but these particular Newcastle kids unfortunately ignore it. Their father murdered, the

REVIEW



Lynne Truss

younger generation of Finneys are certainly asking for trouble, especially from underworld rivals the Simpsons — led by "Bobo" Simpson (John Woodvine with menacing Georgee accent, ranch-style house, dumb-bell exercises, and believable goons). What would make Bobo angry, do you think? Lena Finney making a flaming pyre of his slot machines? (That might make him quite cross). Or

the young eponymous Finney taking over a disused cinema in Simpson territory, but refusing to pay protection money? (It's a bit wild by now.) Or nervous Tom Finney forced to accept a hitman job, and ineptly blowing out Bobo's brains with a shotgun? (That's done it, that's really done it.)

One false move and this story could be preposterous. But by current appearances, *Finney* is impressive, it's the real thing, and the acting is terrific. Although these characters have a lot of front (which fuels the story), luckily over regular glimpses round the side as well. Bobo leaves himself unprotected at home because comically he's fed up with people inquiring what he's reading (a biography of Napoleon). Meanwhile, between the Finneys themselves, last week's cracks are widening to fissures — Lena (Jimmy Nail) of the family

business; Finney rejecting Lena's offers of help with his jazz idea ("This is mine, it's got to be done with the family"). When the time comes for the Finneys to stick together, industrial superglue won't be up to it. "What are you like?" Tom marvelled, shaking his head at Lena's pitiful intransigence: "If you were made of chocolate you'd eat yourself."

For another four weeks *Finney* will slug it out with *Crocodile Shoes* (BBC1), which entertains in a rather different way — with the sides completely blocked off. With *Crocodile Shoes*, it is usually best not to ask any awkward questions about motivation — such as why record producer Adrian (James Wilby) keeps provoking violent drug dealers instead of paying them off, or why his high-class girlfriend Caroline betrayed him, or why Jed (Jimmy Nail) has no emotional

baggage at the age of 39. What he lacks in personal history, however, he makes up for in assurance. With no former experience of a recording studio, and indeed no performing experience of any kind, he cut a fab promo track last night without any qualms whatsoever. I'm still caterwauling "Crocodile Shoes" (there's no other way to sing it, but I know I am being manipulated to commercial ends, and it makes me cross. One way of looking at *Crocodile Shoes* is that it's a seven-hour plug for an album — "Catchy numbers, aren't they? Available soon in a shop near you!" Evidently the *Soldier*, *Soldier* rendition of "Unchained Melody" last week caused viewers to demand a recording, but Central TV officially has no plans to release it, which demonstrates the proper way of doing things. I am tempted to invoke the good old days, but on the other hand, I don't quite dare.

BBC1

- 6.00am Business Breakfast (22564)
- 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (0909380)
- 9.05 Kilroy (s) (276564)
- 10.00 News (CeeFax), regional news and weather (5037498) 10.05 Good Morning with Anne and Nick (s) (5002903)
- 12.00 News (CeeFax), regional news and weather (7218832) 12.05pm Pebble Mill: A Children in Need day special presented by Ross King and, from Martin Chuzzlewit, Julia Sawalha (s) (8860000) 12.55 Regional News and weather (2617494)
- 1.00 One O'Clock News (CeeFax) and weather (40308)
- 1.30 Neighbours (s) (5545138) 1.50 The Great British Quiz (s) (5546249)
- 2.15 Holiday. Reports from Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, San Francisco and Tenerife (s) (487651)
- 2.45 The Flying Doctors. Australian medical drama series (CeeFax) (s) (3385125)
- 3.30 Cartoon (4037303) 3.45 TVK (s) (4025664) 4.00 The New York Bear Show (s) (3465800) 4.05 Get Your Own Back (s) (383274) 4.20 Record Breakers (CeeFax) (s) (5010746)
- 4.55 Newsround (2271922) 5.05 Byker Grove (CeeFax) (s) (2856767)
- 5.35 Neighbours (s) (CeeFax) (s) (577038)
- 6.00 Six O'Clock News (CeeFax) and weather (767)
- 6.30 Regional news magazines (449)



Sue, Terry and Aali with Pudgey Bear (7.00pm)

- 7.00 Children in Need presented by Terry Wogan, Andi Peters and Sue Cook. It is fund-raising time again. This opening two hours includes a penitentiary starring Neil Morrissey, Martin Clunes, Neil Pearson, Tom Georgeson, Kathy Burke, Gary Webster, Annika Rice and Julia Sawalha. Plus, at 7.30 regional fund-raising news and, at 8.00, East 17 perform their latest single "Stay Another Day" and there are guest appearances from the 16-year-old violin prodigy Vanessa Reddy and Gregory Bradley, one of the stars of the new London production of the musical, *Oliver* (21274)
- 9.00 Nine O'Clock News (CeeFax), regional news and weather (4670)
- 9.30 Children in Need. The fund raising continues as Paul McKenna springs some hypnotic surprises on celebrities in the audience; memories of past Eurovision Song Contests are recalled by Patsy Palmer and Michelle Collins from EastEnders; Derek Thompson, Steve Brand and Sue Devaney from *Casualty* and the cast of *Drop the Dead Donkey*; at Whitby Legends Centre, Nicholas Widdowson tells of Chris Barrie and his staff. Plus, a DJ's tribute to Gary Glitter, music from Lulu and Dana Carrel, and a look behind the scenes of the making of *How Do They Do That?* (19891038). At 11.35 there is more regional fund-raising news. The last two hours, from midnight, focus on the cast of *Drop the Dead Donkey*, a celebrity film quiz devised by Barry Norman. Other guests include Aswad and soul singer Carleen Anderson with a gospel choir (75784)
- 10.00am Weather (3002978)

BBC2

- 7.00 Crystal Tipps and Alistair (s) (892545) 7.05 Barney (8991818) 7.10 Thundercats (s) (875877) 7.35 Blue Peter (s) (CeeFax) (s) (445477)
- 8.00 Breakfast News (CeeFax and signing) (6631729) 8.15 The Record. Yesterday's news in Parliament (848670) 8.35 *Crawl Into My Parlor*. Scorpions, sun spiders and centipedes (865477)
- 9.00 Daytime on Two. Educational programmes, Plus, for children, 10.00-10.25 Playdays (823729) 2.00 Fremantle Sam (8438467)
- 2.10 Sport on Friday. Snooker: the first semi-final of the Royal Liver Assurance UK championship; Rugby Union: a preview of tomorrow's game at Cardiff Arms Park between Wales and South Africa (s). Includes News and weather at 3.00 (537670) 3.50 News (CeeFax) and weather (3022106)
- 4.00 Today's the Day. History quiz (s) (832)
- 4.30 Snooker. Further live coverage of the Royal Liver Assurance UK championship (s) (11167)
- 5.30 Esther. Discussion series (s) (498)
- 6.00 Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons. Classic science-fiction series (s) (CeeFax) (802477)
- 6.25 Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased). Vintage detective series (s) (788632)
- 7.15 The O-Zone. Pop music (s) (750496)
- 7.30 Sounds of the Sixties (s) (545)
- 8.00 Public Eye: Out of the Asylum. An investigation into a disturbing case of care that went fatally wrong. (CeeFax) (2477)
- 8.30 Perpetual Motion. The DC-3 Dakota. (CeeFax) (s) (4212)
- 9.00 The Trial: A Stab in the Dark. (CeeFax) (400729)
- 9.50 Punky Black Shorts: The Godsend. Lenny Henry's writing and directing debut (s). (Teletext) (148212)



Ian Hislop and Angus Deayton (10.00pm)

- 10.00 Have I Got News for You. With Angus Deayton, Ian Hislop, Paul Merton, Helen Atkinson-Wood and Sir Teddy Taylor, MP (s) (74728)
- 10.30 Newsnight. (CeeFax) (569125)
- 11.15 Newman and Baddiel Read in Pieces (s). (CeeFax) (s) (914800). Wales: Welsh Lobby 11.45 Newman and Baddiel 12.15am The Larry Sanders Show 12.45 The Fugitive (b/w) 1.25-2.35 Snooker
- 11.45 The Larry Sanders Show. American comedy series (s). (CeeFax) (8789442)
- 12.15 The Fugitive (b/w). Classic man-on-the-run drama series (s). (CeeFax) (8789442)
- 1.05 Snooker. Highlights of the first semi-final in the Royal Liver Assurance UK championship (s) (895220). Ends at 2.10

VideoPlus and the Video PlusCode numbers. The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCode numbers, which allow you to programme your video recorder in advance. "VideoPlus" is a trademark of the Video PlusCode system. For more details on the Video PlusCode system, see the back of the TV Guide. (VideoPlus is a registered trademark of the Video PlusCode system. All rights reserved.)

CHOICE



Frances McMenamin defends (BBC2, 9.00pm)

The Trial: A Stab in the Dark (BBC2, 9.00pm)
James Robertson, a mild-mannered father of two, stands in the dock charged with the attempted murder of a man stabbed outside a pub. He also faces two assault charges arising from a previous incident. The star of this second televised trial from the Scottish courts is Robertson's feisty barrister, Frances McMenamin. The case, which arises out of long-festering disputes between neighbours on a housing estate, looks rather cut-throat. With 24 witnesses called to support the charges against her client, McMenamin has a job on her hands. Few viewers will not be rooting for the star, and quickly weeping Robertson as the advocate sets out to provide a lesson in how to discredit seemingly watertight prosecution evidence.

Perpetual Motion (BBC2, 8.30pm) (not Scotland)
A consistently enjoyable series about classics of transport ends with the DC-3 Dakota. Launched in 1935 by the Douglas company of Santa Monica, California, it transformed the aviation industry by making passengers commercially viable for the first time. The modest 21-seater may seem a long way from today's jumbo jets but one fan claims was as much ahead of its time as the Concorde. The film traces the DC-3's conversion to military use and Sir Freddie Laker pops up to explain his involvement with the plane as a supplier of spare parts. Production ended in 1940 at the dawn of the jet age but the DC-3 is still in widespread use, not least in flying out food to the jungle people of South America.

Short Stories: Hooked! (Channel 4, 8.00pm)
Anybody who imagines that angling is a male preserve will not have met Susanna, Linda and Carol, three fly-fishing fanatics hoping to make the English Ladies team for the national championship. Although not actually English (she comes from Sligo and has the accent to prove it) Susanna is as passionate as they are and the reigning champion. Linda goes fishing to unwind from a high-pressure job as a pharmaceutical rep. Carol comes from a family of fishermen, headed by a 94-year-old man who has absolutely no doubt that women are better at the job than men. The climax of Nancy Duldig's likeable film is the eight hours of non-stop fishing to decide which of the three friends comes out top this year.

Children in Need (BBC1, 7.00pm)
The bad news is hours and hours of Terry Wogan, the good news is the absence any scheduled appearance by Nicholas Widdowson. The smiling, news-reading Nicholas Widdowson's single with *The Empire* should be a work of a week. The small hours will be enlivened (or not, according to taste) by the drag queen Lily Savage, who seems to be on every TV show these days except *Songs of Praise*. Peter Waymark

CARLTON LW1

- 6.00 GMTV (3085583)
- 9.25 Supermarket Sweep (s) (4107274) 9.55 London Today (s) (503106)
- 10.00 The Time... the Place (s) (9671922)
- 10.35 This Morning (7358283) 12.20 London Today (Teletext) and weather (7214816)
- 12.30 News (Teletext) and weather (6055629)
- 12.55 Coronation Street (s). (Teletext) (900390) 1.25 Home and Away (Teletext) (2093477)
- 1.55 The Chrystal Rose Show. The chat show discusses infidelity with a studio audience and guests, including Angus Deayton's former partner, Stephanie De Sykes (s) (5200869)
- 2.25 A Country Practice (s) (2391589) 2.50 Take the High Road (7035522)
- 3.20 ITN News headlines (Teletext) (6315941) 3.25 London Today (Teletext) and weather (6314212)
- 3.30 The Magic House (s) (4022477) 3.45 The Spook of Bottle Bay (s) (4016322) 4.00 Avenger Penguins (s) (867699) 4.25 Taz-Mania (s) (6) (5231309) 4.40 Virtually Impossible (s) (4882372)
- 5.10 After 5. (Teletext) (2840108)
- 5.40 ITN Early Evening News (Teletext) and weather (91632)
- 8.00 Home and Away (s). (Teletext) (999903)
- 8.25 London Tonight (Teletext) (s) (345699)
- 7.00 Catchphrase. (Teletext) (s) (3583)



Al Nejdari and Anne Kirkbride wed (7.30pm)

- 7.30 Coronation Street. Samir (Al Nejdari) and Deirdre (Anne Kirkbride) tie the knot (Teletext) (699)
- 8.00 The Bill: Down a Blind Alley. Carlo arrests a mugger, but has some explaining to do when he arrives at the station with a bloody nose. (Teletext) (9303)
- 8.30 Strange but True? Michael Appel investigates the supernatural. Tonight how a man's near-death experience has changed his life. (Teletext) (s) (8036)
- 8.00 Peak Practice. Kevin Whately and Amanda Burton star in the medical drama series set in the Derbyshire countryside (s). (Teletext) (s) (6903)
- 10.00 News at Ten (Teletext) and weather (94563)
- 10.30 Crime Tonight. Penny Smith appeals for help with unsolved crimes in the London area and parades this month's rogues' gallery of criminals caught on security cameras (28477)
- 11.30 Aids Weekend: The Speakeasy Aids Special. To mark World Aids Day, Emma Forbes and Neil Fox present a frank examination of sexual habits and the spread of HIV and Aids (4954)
- 12.30 London Tonight (Teletext) and weather (2189317)
- 12.40 Tropical Heat. American detective drama series (995797)
- 1.35 Aids Weekend: Whales On (s) (9564978)
- 2.35 Londoners. Inhabitants of the capital make their own firms about life in London (814977)
- 3.35 Cinema. Cinema, Cinema (2189317)
- 4.05 Noisy Mothers (s) (3355881)
- 5.00 Best of British Motor Sport (80626)
- 5.30 ITN Morning News (56510). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

- 6.35 Terrytoons. Classic cartoons (4885632)
- 7.00 The Big Breakfast (26362)
- 9.00 You Bet Your Life (s) (71632)
- 9.30 Schoolhouse. Eureka! (8632000) 9.45 Stop, Look, Listen (837545) 10.00 Fourways Farm (5071458) 10.10 Maths Everywhere (7252121) 10.25 The Technology Programme (7290767) 10.40 Off Limits (5798748) 11.05 Schools at Work (9251477) 11.11 Time for Maths (9345498) 11.22 Stage One (9326532) 11.40 How Was Used to Live (3210670)
- 12.00 Profiles of Nature: Ground Squirrels (s) (91466)
- 12.30 Seaside Street (57767) 1.30 The Bluffers (17922)
- 2.00 FILM: The Ship That Died of Shame (1965, b/w) starring Richard Attenborough, George Baker and Bill Owen. Drama about a Second World War seaman who, on demobilisation, persuades two of his shipmates to buy and refit their wartime motor gunboat to use in smuggling operations. Directed by Basil Dearden. (Teletext) (53354)
- 3.40 The Decision. Franz Seeburger plans to ski down Piz Palu in the Swiss Alps in a series of death defying jumps (s) (7695057)
- 4.00 Travelog (s). (Teletext) (s) (800)
- 4.30 Fifteen to One. (Teletext) (s) (212)
- 5.00 Cutting Edge: Absolutely Marie Claire (s). (Teletext) (s) (9516)
- 6.00 Blossom. Comedy (s) (s) (477)
- 6.30 Moviepatch presented by Johnny Vaughan. Crème-magazine in Manchester review the latest releases. (Teletext) (s) (729)
- 7.00 Channel 4 News (Teletext) and weather (171361)
- 7.50 You Don't Know Me But... (351309)



Carol Neal, lady of the files (8.00pm)

- 8.00 Short Stories: Hooked! (Teletext) (s) (7545)
- 8.30 Brookside. (Teletext) (s) (9380)
- 9.00 Ellen. American comedy starring Ellen DeGeneres. (Teletext) (s) (7390)
- 9.30 Cheers (s). (Teletext) (16157)
- 10.00 Roseanne. The wisecracking comedy returns for a seventh series (92126)
- 10.30 Clive Anderson Talks Back. The inquisitive lawyer verbally scatters Jack Charlton, Sandra Bernhard and King Arthur, a druid (s) (503941)
- 11.10 The World presented by Taryn Christian and Dani Behr. The guests include chat show hostess Ricki Lake and there is a filmed interview with John Wayne Bobbitt (s) (93800)
- 12.15am FILM: Swoon (1991, b/w) starring Daniel Schachar and Craig Chester. An explicitly gay reconstruction of the 1923 Leopold and Loeb murder case in which a 19-year-old homosexual kidnapper and killed a teenage boy. Directed by Tom Kalin (438442)
- 1.55 FILM: A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Forum (1956) starring Zero Mostel, Phil Silvers, Jack Gilford and Michael Crawford. Comedy, based on the Broadway and West End hit about the adventures of a 1st-century Roman slave seeking his freedom. Directed by Richard Lester. (Teletext) (977317). Ends at 3.40

VARIATIONS

- ANGLIA**
As London except: 9.30am-10.00 Anglia News (893108) 12.30pm-12.55 Anglia News (2141618) 1.25 The Young Doctors (5545838) 2.20 Heaven and Home (2990329) 3.25-3.30 Anglia News (814212) 5.10-5.40 Weekend (2840106) 6.25-7.00 Anglia Weather (5037498) 7.00-7.30 The Young Doctors (5545838) 7.30-8.00 The Young Doctors (5545838) 8.00-8.30 The Young Doctors (5545838) 8.30-9.00 The Young Doctors (5545838) 9.00-9.30 The Young Doctors (5545838) 9.30-10.00 The Young Doctors (5545838) 10.00-10.30 The Young Doctors (5545838) 10.30-11.00 The Young Doctors (5545838) 11.00-11.30 The Young Doctors (5545838) 11.30-12.00 The Young Doctors (5545838) 12.00-12.30 The Young Doctors (5545838) 12.30-1.00 The Young Doctors (5545838) 1.00-1.30 The Young Doctors (5545838) 1.30-2.00 The Young Doctors (5545838) 2.00-2.30 The Young Doctors (5545838) 2.30-3.00 The Young Doctors (5545838) 3.00-3.30 The Young Doctors (5545838) 3.30-4.00 The Young Doctors (5545838) 4.00-4.30 The Young Doctors (5545838) 4.30-5.00 The Young 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SPORT

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 25 1994

United return in shame and silence

By ROB HUGHES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THE company of footballers returning from a humiliating night in Europe is not a recipe for Happy Hour. Aboard charter flight LEI 9886, the faces and the silence told the story of how far Manchester United fell short of expectations in Gothenburg on Wednesday.

They had flown to Sweden so sure of their ranking. Now they were separate beings. At the front, Sir Bobby Charlton, a director, sat Ramsey-like, his face white with shock. Behind him, Martin Edwards, the chairman, seemed in deep contemplation, wondering no doubt what to tell the shareholders at the annual meeting today after a 3-1 European Cup Champions' League defeat reckoned to have cost the club £7 million.

And Alex Ferguson, the United manager? Still reddened with an-

ger and embarrassment, he looked unapproachable.

Of the players, perhaps the demeanour of Paul Ince, so often the warrior, transmitted the mood. He had been sent off for a moment of indiscipline. He and Mark Hughes have now forfeited the right to be their team's inspiration in the final chance of a reprieve, against Galatasaray on December 7. Ince sat with his head down in a book. The pages could have been as blank as the substance of his performance and he was using the covers to avoid eye contact with his critics.

Where was the experience, the leadership, of Ince and Hughes, or of the French musketeer, Eric Cantona, who owed so much after his four-match ban but gave so little? His contribution was one magnificent leap and a downward header to invite Hughes to score with his customary acrobatic bal-

ance. But Cantona also fell away into indiscipline, with his customary yellow card, and was a mite fortunate that the foul did not make the Italian referee see red.

The three of them, in a team of callow youth and frayed, ageing talents, were overcome, not this time by genius, as in Barcelona, but by Scandinavian part-time players, men who have already begun their winter occupations as bank clerks, tobacconists and public relations representatives. It made matters no easier to take that they base their game on the English virtues of athletic running, simple passing, high morale and a calm unity.

It will do no good to pretend that the failings of British technique have gone away, or that the impending report commissioned by the Football Association and the Professional Footballers' Association will provide a ready panacea to decades of ignoring proper

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gothenburg	—	5	4	0	19	6	8
Barcelona	—	5	2	1	2	10	7
Manchester United	—	5	1	2	7	11	4
Galatasaray	—	5	1	3	3	5	3

RESULTS: Manchester United 4 IFK Gothenburg 2, Barcelona 2 Galatasaray 1, Galatasaray 0 Manchester United 0 IFK Gothenburg 2 Barcelona 1, IFK Gothenburg 1 Galatasaray 0, Manchester United 2, Barcelona 2, Galatasaray 0 IFK Gothenburg 1, Barcelona 3 Manchester United 0, IFK Gothenburg 3 Manchester United 1, Galatasaray 2 Barcelona 1.

TO PLAY: Dec 7: Manchester United v Galatasaray, Barcelona v IFK Gothenburg

coaching in favour of bludgeoning the ball high and long. United, in their third season of transcending English football, were destroyed by footballers who gave an object lesson in concentrating on playing for and with one another.

From Roger Gustafsson, their coach, only misplaced kindness towards the English was heard: "If

you compare us, you see that United came with many injuries and problems," Gustafsson said. "The overseas rule is not kind to English teams and you play in a very tough league, with too many games and too long a winter. It makes it very hard for English clubs to compete. If we could change the situation, if Manchester United were where we are and we had to play in the English system, things tonight would have been completely different."

He then reeled off two telling statistics: 19 of the 22 players available to IFK Gothenburg were fit and waiting in hibernation for this night. According to Gustafsson, five or six of his team are great supporters of Manchester United.

"Maybe for that reason they will give everything to try to beat Barcelona in the next game," he said. "It is difficult for us because

we have no football in Sweden now. It is not so easy when our league is on winter break to keep the speed ... but the boys in the dressing-room said after the game they will do everything possible to help United."

Maybe it is not all kindness. Maybe they would sooner face United for a third time than have Barcelona as competitors in the last eight. In any event, despite Barcelona's own shame in going down 2-1 to Galatasaray in Istanbul, surely the millionaires of the Nou Camp will repress the Gothenburg aspirations.

Things are moving, one suspects, towards a Barcelona versus Ajax final, but Johan Cruyff, whose youth was spent with Ajax and whose temper rises with the exasperating moods of Barcelona, was even more outspoken than Ferguson late on Wednesday night. "We effectively played in Istanbul with ten men," he said. "Stoichkov made no contribution whatsoever." This was a coach, arguably the coach, bewildered by a player he had insisted barely a week earlier had no true competition for the 1994 European player-of-the-year title.

So the plane landed in Manchester. The hour was 2.30am, the silence still pervaded the luggage hall, except for the chairman's attempts to explain why United, with profits exceeding £10 million, had failed to carry out the promise of himself and his manager to buy English players for the European campaign.

"We have the money, and we are prepared to break records for the players we want," Edwards said, "but obviously it is no good buying English players if they are not better than the foreigners you've already got." Obviously. Over and out.

Little takes step nearer Villa Park

By DENNIS SHAW

THE widely-anticipated outcome of Brian Little's resignation from Leicester City on Tuesday is due to be confirmed with his appointment as Aston Villa manager today, his 41st birthday. Little was interviewed by Doug Ellis, the Aston Villa chairman yesterday and, though no decision was forthcoming, an official appointment is expected today.

Little spent five hours at Ellis's large house in Birmingham's stockbroker belt and the pair parted with a warm shake of the hands, no doubt, sealed agreement on at least a three-year contract.

It appears that Ellis has taken 15 days to replace Ron Atkinson, whom he dismissed on the day after Villa's turned a 3-1 lead into a 4-3 defeat by Wimbledon at Selhurst Park.

When he resigned from Filbert Street, Little said his reasons were "personal" and insisted that, while he would welcome an approach by Villa, he would not necessarily end up there. Few doubted that he would, however. One of his coaches, John Gregory, resigned from Leicester on Wednesday and he, too, could be joining Villa.

Allan Evans, a former Villa player like the other two, remains as caretaker manager of Leicester City, where Martin O'Neill is tipped to be Little's likely successor.

Martin George, the

Leicester chairman, had denied Ellis permission to speak to his management unless he first agreed to pay compensation of £1.5 million — way outside Villa's assessment. Then, when Little's resignation was accepted "with much reluctance" by the Leicester board, he was presumably left as a free agent to apply for the Villa post.

Now the question of whether

England will stage a home international "outside London for the first time in 20 years when they face Sweden at Elland Road, Leeds on June 6 as part of a four-nation international tournament. England's other games, against Brazil and Japan, will take place at Wembley. The last time England played outside London in this country was in the 1-1 draw with Poland at Goodison Park in January 1966.

er Villa will pay Leicester any compensation remains open, though it may prove that Ellis has got his man without either a payment or a change of inducement. Little made nearly 300 appearances for Villa scoring more than 80 goals between 1969 and 1981, when injury ended his career.

Toshack returns, page 43



Michael Atherton, the England captain, has time to share a joke with Cyril Mitchley, the South African umpire, before the first Test match against Australia in Brisbane

Australian lights increase cricket purists' gloom

CRICKET has stood by its purists well over the years. Here we are, in 1994, and two universities who can barely rub two decent cricketers together are still rewarded with first-class status; some people still believe that a cover-driven two from David Gower is worth more than a David Boon square-jab for four; and England are still captained by a man who believes his team can win the Ashes.

But there is no accounting for the Australian Cricket Board (ACB). Its pleasure in tinkering with the one-day game is well known and longstanding — cycle-shorts and carving up a match into four

quarters are only the latest examples — but until yesterday it had struggled to make a mark on first-class cricket, or proper cricket, as it is known among the cognoscenti.

Yesterday, the Sheffield Shield match between Western Australia and Queensland in Perth began at 2.30pm and continued into the evening under floodlights. Day-night matches have been used in one-day cricket since Kerry Packer introduced them in the late 1970s, but never before in the first-class game. The reason is, of course, money. The ACB wanted to arrest the decline in Shield attendances. It may not only be the

A first-class game was played under floodlights yesterday. Simon Wilde says the motives were clear even if the batsmen's vision was less so

purists, though, who come to regard yesterday as the day that the lights went out. It is all very well playing one-day matches under floodlights — the game exists primarily to entertain — but first-class cricket serves greater needs, one of which is to encourage play of the highest calibre.

But the floodlit format is riddled with problems. The ACB would have put shield matches under floodlights

years ago but for delays in developing a suitable ball. The traditional red ball proved unusable under lights and the white replacements that sufficed in 50-over games could not withstand the rigours of the 85 overs required of them in the shield.

The board now claims to have solved the problem by using a yellow ball. This has been hailed by Tony Mann, the Western Australia cricket

manager, as "completely satisfactory". Unfortunately, it did not prove to be so yesterday, when it faded quite markedly as it grew older.

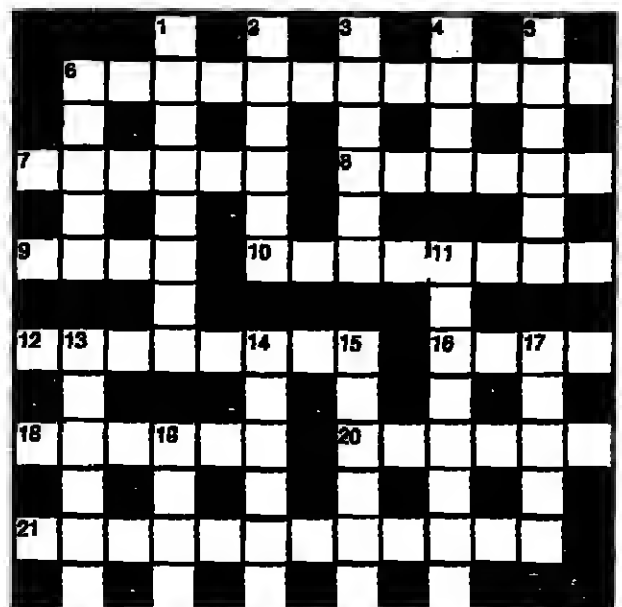
Other difficulties manifested themselves. During twilight, three senior Western Australia batsmen — Langer, Martyn and Moody — all fell in quick succession so that their side, having begun well, finished the day on an indifferent 279 for eight. Nor did the Perth public roll up in droves, a crowd of 2,000 scarcely being what the ACB had had in mind.

Floodlights will be tried in two further shield matches this season — in Sydney and

Melbourne — in order that every state experiences them before a decision is taken on their long-term future. The main obstacle to their introduction in Britain would be the climate, evening dew and a lengthy dusk not helping either spectator or player, but in the southern hemisphere the idea could well flourish.

As for the purists, one can only hope that at the sort of time the floodlights will be cracking into life they are already tucked up in bed with their first editions of *The Essential Neville Cardus*.

Black Monday, page 44
Fraser puzzled, page 44

TIMES TWO
CROSSWORD
No 328

ACROSS

- 6 (Hens') hierarchy (7,5)
- 7 Bring about, influence (6)
- 8 Pill (6)
- 9 Indonesian island off E Java (4)
- 10 Metal-lined box, used for removals (3,5)
- 12 Nonsexual relationship (8)
- 16 Common, spreading (4)
- 18 In discomfort; very desirous (6)
- 20 Contradiction (6)
- 21 Piece of good fortune (6,2,4)

DOWN

- 1 Make conversant (8)
- 2 Dumb (6)
- 3 Berle Wooster's dreaded Aunt (6)
- 4 Dull in colour (4)
- 5 Niche, closure of session (6)
- 6 Chinese bearlike animal (5)
- 11 Forceful speech (8)
- 13 Discover position (6)
- 14 Small (valuable) lump (6)
- 15 Organise into a system (6)
- 17 Open: cancel (postage stamp) (5)
- 19 Religious image (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 327

ACROSS: 1 Breast 5 Maim 9 Bravo 10 Niggle 11 Withheld 12 Urbane 15 Eface 18 Nauseous 20 Unable 22 Cutting 23 Semi 24 Antler
DOWN: 2 Rabbit 3 Anathema 4 Trade 6 Agog 7 Merlin 8 Fondue 13 Benedict 14 Seneca 16 Fungus 17 Jungle 19 Ultra 21 Boom

WINNING MOVE
By Raymond Keene

This position is from the game Epishin - Kir. Georgiev, Bulgaria 1994. Both sides have dangerous passed pawns, but the black one is the more advanced and it is also posing threats to the white King. How did Black, to play, make the most of this trump?

Solution, page 46
Raymond Keene, page 8

WORD-WATCHING
By Philip Howard

HOURAGE

- a. Hours spent working
- b. A Mediterranean storm
- c. A brothel

KARABURAN

- a. An Asian whirlwind
- b. An Indian language
- c. A Turkish head-dress

MPRET

- a. A measure of acceleration
- b. An Albanian ruler
- c. A fat Greek Ariana barrel

MACCA

- a. Peppery potentia
- b. A bird
- c. A prickly palm

Answers on page 46

